







915.1 A98  
Ayscough  
Firecracker land

768147

915.1 A98  
Ayscough \$3.00  
Firecracker land

768147

kansas city



public library

kansas city, missouri

Books will be issued only  
on presentation of library card.

Please report lost cards and  
change of residence promptly.

Card holders are responsible for  
all books, records, films, pictures  
or other library materials  
checked out on their cards.









FIRECRACKER LAND

*Pictures of the Chinese World  
for Younger Readers*









UP THE YANGTZE KIANG

# FIRECRACKER LAND

*Pictures of the Chinese World  
for Younger Readers*

By  
FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

*With Illustrations by*  
LUCILLE DOUGLASS

THE JUNIOR LITERARY GUILD  
AND  
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY  
NEW YORK MCMXXXII

COPYRIGHT, 1932, BY FLORENCE AYS COUGH

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO REPRODUCE  
THIS BOOK OR PARTS THEREOF IN ANY FORM

**The Riverside Press**

CAMBRIDGE • MASSACHUSETTS

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

TO  
JOHN HOLDEN, Esq.

You, Sir, in your days of youth and strength have met with  
dangerous times; your intelligence, bright as sun and moon,  
Is an aid to the administration; the courageous vigor of your  
bearing is a very real comfort to the people.  
Altars of State to the Spirits of Earth, to the Spirits of Grain,  
are now restored;  
The tangle of calamity, the fierce fighting, have ceased; if it  
be not you, Sir, who has done this thing?

*Tu Fu: The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*



## ABOUT FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

*(who wrote the book)*

By LUCILLE DOUGLASS

*(who drew the pictures)*

WE SAT in Florence Ayscough's upstairs study at St. Andrews, in New Brunswick, looking through the broad window laced with branches, across the Bay of Plentiful Fish. I had found her there at her desk, a vivid figure in scarlet and purple — the colours which she has made peculiarly her own and of which she has woven brilliant patterning across her allotted space in the tapestry of life. Her profile showed clear-cut against the dark frame of a mirror in which was reflected the brilliant green of the leaves outside, dancing in the sunlight. The necklace of opals she wore sent back this brightness in myriad shafts of colour, making a perfect setting for the portrait I had come to paint. The colours fairly sang — the colours on my palette answered, but over my soul settled the shadow of utter inadequacy. 'Ah,' I exclaimed, paraphrasing Li T'ai-po, who has referred to 'the bitterness of writing poetry,' 'I feel the bitterness of painting portraits.'

One can put on canvas the finely modelled features, carved in broad planes, as if sculptured from marble; the black hair, with its peculiar dusky purple quality, folding itself into a frame for the face, but it is another matter to fix the lightning shift of expression that harmonizes with her quickly moving mind — like the play of light and shade on the surface of the mirror.

Before my eyes rose innumerable pictures against innumerable backgrounds. In place of the mirror and its gay reflections, I saw her sitting in front of the Moon Fireplace in her 'Grass Hut' on the Yellow Reach, where so often I literally sat at her feet and listened while she read her newest translation or talked of the Chinese culture which forms the background of her life. Sometimes it was the theatre of which she is so fond and which we often attended together, accompanied by the Number Two Boy, who translated for us. Again, it was the intimate happenings of the household — for Mrs. Ayscough always takes the keenest interest in all those who touch her life, however casually. Her range of interests ran the gamut from the larger concerns of war relief to the home for Chinese girls who were salvaged from unspeakable misery and hardship and cared for until suitable marriages could be arranged for them. She is peculiarly sympathetic with young people.

One incident comes vividly to my mind. Pavlova was giving a series of performances in Shanghai. Mrs. Ayscough had a birthday party for me, taking us later to see the famous dancer. Pavlova was impersonating the French doll. Looking at her exquisite dance, it seemed to me such a pity to be grown up and disillusioned, and I said to Mrs. Ayscough: 'When I see that, I long to be ten years old. How I wish every child in Shanghai could watch that doll come to life. It would be like seeing a miracle.'

Instantly her face lit up. 'They *shall* see it!' she exclaimed.

No sooner said than done. An early morning visit to Pavlova. A conference with the manager of the theatre.

A *matinée* was arranged. The schools were notified. The house was filled with eager faces. The curtain went up and the miracle happened. When the curtain fell in the last number, there was a great sigh — but for a little space the children had dwelt in paradise.

In the years that I have known Florence Ayscough, I have many times been puzzled that she is so deeply rooted in the Far East, with so complete an understanding of the ancient Chinese thought and culture as if she were one with them. This is all the more strange because her ancestors were of New England stock. It is very unusual that an Occidental is so at home in Oriental processes of thought — just as if they spoke the same language. Not only does she understand them, but is able in her writings to make others understand them, which in itself is a rare gift.

Mrs. Ayscough writes of China from within; putting into her vivid telling not only the pageantry of that age-old country, for she has travelled from east to west and from north to south the roads of ancient culture, but describing with a deep conviction the customs and manners, the religious teachings and cults.

It is this deep understanding of the hidden forces which are shaping modern China today that is so sadly lacking in the average Westerner. Present-day China can only be measured in terms of the past centuries, for it is upon the culture of those past centuries that the foundations of the modern China are being laid, however vigorously young China may protest. China has always looked backward for her inspiration, even though her steps went forward. The events of the past twenty years prove this to be true. Like so many of



the modern buildings one sees in the newer parts of the cities, which have been remodelled in the rush of progress, the front is pure English style, but within pure Chinese. They turn back upon themselves — it is at once their strength and their weakness; but out of this curious inversion a new China is slowly but surely growing — a China that we of today must reckon with, for with the future of China is bound up the future of Asia and the peace of the world.

The problems of China which are confronting the world today will still confront the world of tomorrow; they are the heritage of the next generation. So any light that can be thrown upon them is of vital importance. In this book for young people, Mrs. Ayscough has given generously of her wealth of knowledge of Chinese culture. From her years of study and travel she has woven a rich tapestry against which the events of today and tomorrow can be seen in sharp relief. You boys and girls of today, born into a world of international problems, will accept with keen comprehension the manifold ramifications of an alien civilization; and in the light of this comprehension, you will find understanding, which will give you a feeling of friendship for those of many countries.

I feel a close kinship with 'A Chinese Mirror' and 'Pictures of the Chinese World,' for it has been in this collaboration, if an illustrator may so dignify her work, that I have been brought into close contact with Mrs. Ayscough. It has given me, too, a new insight into her many-sided character; one phase especially, that might be called the keynote — an absolutely undeviating devotion to the truth. This unswerving loyalty on her

part and my artistic impressionism often brought me in sharp contact with unexpected corners. This same divergence of viewpoint was introduced when I was painting the slides for her lecture on Tu Fu. I looked at them from the pictorial angle, she from the point of the incident she wished to illustrate. She is a very artistic as well as competent photographer, which enables her to record the exact place desired for the slide, and prefers, if possible, to use her own photographs for her lectures.

Her whole attitude toward life is constructive; she attacks a building problem with the same buoyant enthusiasm with which she approaches a new literary task, and does it as thoroughly. In the building of 'The Grass Hut' by the Yellow Reach in Shanghai, she followed to the smallest detail the ceremonies used by the Chinese in the construction of a Kiangsu farmhouse.

Scholar, musician, artist and poet, but most of all a gracious woman, her enthusiasm for life makes radiant all who come her way.

LUCILLE DOUGLASS



# FIRECRACKER LAND



## CHAPTER I

### PICTURES OF A CHINESE BACKGROUND

The work of my life can only cease when my coffin is closed;  
Until then my resolve, my yearning to comprehend is unchanging.

Tu Fu: *The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*



# FIRECRACKER LAND



## CHAPTER I

### *Pictures of a Chinese Background*

#### A CHILD IN CHINA

I WAS born in Shanghai. My earliest recollections are of the wide sky and sweeping plain of the Yangtze Valley. My father, a Nova Scotian, and my mother, a Bostonian, were among the early foreign residents in that port which has now become one of the great cities of the world. Papa owned the fleet of cargo boats which still travel to Woosung at the mouth of the Yangtze River, there to load and unload the big foreign ships. In the early days the Tug and Lighter Company, as it is called, was a much smaller affair than it is now, but it was always exciting to watch busy steam launches towing the cargo boats — which look for all the world like black beetles. When we arrived or left on our various journeys, we always travelled between Woosung and Shanghai on a special launch, and that was exciting too, especially to a wide-eyed child like myself. Nowadays the stretch of river, fourteen miles in length, leading to the mouth of the Whangpoo, has been deepened and straightened, so that big ships often come up to the Shanghai Bund, but if they do lie at Woosung passengers are brought up by one of the tugs belonging to the company which Papa founded so long ago. He

loved his steam launches and his cargo boats almost as much as he did us, his children, and was always dashing about, inspecting, organizing, and visiting ships in his energetic, decided way.

The house I was born in is now the International Club. If you drive out the famous Bubbling Well Road



MODERN CITY OF SHANGHAI AND AGE-OLD JUNKS

from the Bund in Shanghai, you will see it standing on the right-hand side, less than a mile beyond the Defence Creek. A mile farther on you come to the Bubbling Well itself. Now it is surrounded by houses, but in my childhood it seemed the Well at the edge of the world. It was a real adventure to walk out there, to be lifted up between the granite Fo dogs which stood at the four corners of the well, and to gaze down into its green bubbling depths. Even now I never miss an opportunity,

when in Shanghai, of visiting the spot and recapturing that thrill.

But to go back to the house, which looks now much as it did then, although my beloved garden has vanished. When I was small the garden seemed enormous. An oval drive led up to the great creamy-white house, covered with yellow roses. During the short season of their bloom, the gardeners cut them by the hundred. Every morning Mamma arranged them in shallow baskets, and they were piled into the trap in which Papa drove himself to the office. This was a high dogcart with red wheels, drawn by a stocky Mongolian pony. So every morning we watched it dash round the oval drive, and knew how busy Papa's office coolies were soon to be delivering the roses to our friends in Town.

In those days the garden was my world, where I could run about as I liked. There, a big-eyed child with long straight hair and a bang across her forehead, I rode solemnly round and round on my donkey for miles and miles. He was a fearfully clever donkey named Neddie, coloured grey and white. He used to come up the long flight of steps on to the verandah, enter the dining-room, and trot daintily round the table collecting his tribute of sugar from each of us. Neddie was so famous for his cleverness that when the Amateur Dramatic Society put on 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves,' he was asked to appear on the stage. He was pampered for the rest of his life on the strength of the great renown he won carrying the goods of the Merchant Ali Baba to market in the play. Neddie was given to the Arch-deacon's son when we left China, so my donkey stepped



on his delicate little feet from the theatrical to the ecclesiastical world!

After Neddie came Brownie, my pony. He was bay with black points, a beautiful little creature like a diminutive horse. He came from Formosa. His carriage had a tan awning and scallops bound with red, and how proudly I drove him while my small Mafoo ran panting at his head!

He and Neddie both lived with the riding and carriage ponies, and no pleasure was more exquisite to me than going into the stables with Papa. There stood the ponies in two long rows, warmly covered with their yellow blankets. The Number One Mafoo — that is, the coachman — always handed me a bundle of freshly washed carrots with which I fed the ponies one by one, and a little shiver ran down my spine as the big white teeth progressed, bite by bite, nearer my hand.

But my goose was my great friend and my greatest joy. He had been sent from one of Papa's office staff as a New Year's gift. He was of course a white goose, but he arrived all stained with red, the colour of happiness. He and I took an immense fancy to each other. (People were unkind enough to say that like attracted like!) He used to sit on my knee — he never bit me, though he was perfectly detestable to everyone else — and, putting his long neck around mine under my hair, he would gently rub my ear with his beak. But his manners to our guests! He used to take hold of the men's trousers with his strong knobbed yellow beak, and whack violently at their shins with his big wings. Impossible to dislodge him! They used to shout for help until I, his only friend, came to take him away. He was

almost as big as I at that time. I don't know what became of him. In the end, he had become so thoroughly unpopular that he was quietly made to disappear.

Then there was the aviary, very fascinating to me as a child. It was on the top of the rockery, and in it were golden pheasants and many other bright-plumaged birds. I loved particularly the Mandarin ducks, which were bottle-green and deep blue like the night sky. The Chinese make this bird, in pairs, the emblem of married happiness, for if the cock and the hen are separated, they die of grief.

Below the aviary was the long arbour covered with roses that made a lovely pattern of sun and shadow on the ground beneath. Near by grew yellow and red cox-combs which I used to pick and put in little cages. I pretended they were my red and yellow parrots.

#### THE BIRTH OF AMBITION

When I was nine, a great resolution took shape. I decided to play the violin. To my astonishment I met with opposition from all my family, especially from my mother, who had already observed in me enthusiasms that were short-lived. Still, in the end I got my violin, and Mr. Iburg, a middle-aged German, was engaged as my teacher. Then came long hours of practice — and I confess there were times I wished my parents had continued to refuse me. Nevertheless, I stuck to it.

There was a most charming old gentleman named Mr. Hearn who used to play the 'cello with my mother every Sunday evening. He seemed to me very, very old, but I was very fond of him and he was extremely interested in my musical studies. When Remenyi, the

famous violinist, came to Shanghai, I was taken for the first time to the theatre *in the evening!* It seemed to me to be the middle of the night. It was perfectly dark, with all the light concentrated on the violinist on the stage. I was standing entranced at the front of the box, and after Remenyi had executed a particularly brilliant passage, Mr. Hearn leaned forward and whispered very gently, 'When you can play like that I will give you a silver sixpence!'

It was shortly after this that I decided to become a bareback rider in a circus. You in the West who go to three-ring circuses can hardly conceive how intensely excited we were over the tiny travelling show that came to Shanghai: one fat white horse, one baby elephant, one marvellous equestrienne in pink tarlatan, and all about the edges of the ring the faces of the rich Chinese who had flocked to see this example of Western culture!

Well, I decided to be a circus rider. My stern parents refused to allow me to practise either on my pony or the donkey, so I was forced to rig up an inanimate substitute on which I balanced precariously, jumping at intervals through home-made paper hoops.

All this took place in the garden, which was still my world, for little European children who lived in China in those days lived very isolated lives. Our chambermaids and parlourmaids and cooks were not maids at all, they were men, except our nurses, who were called *Amahs*. There were a good many of these men maids, but they did not all live at our house. They came to us at certain hours of the day or night, and went home to their families outside the grounds.

The head of them all, and the benevolent despot of

the whole establishment, was our butler, a dignified and imposing old Chinese with a beautifully kept pig-tail, and a long silk robe. Mamma turned to him in every emergency. I remember one occasion when she and I were sitting by the drawing-room fire waiting for Papa to come home from his office. It was a dark winter afternoon. Mamma, I remember, wore a grey-green tea gown with creamy lace, and I, a solemn child looking up at her from a footstool, wore the red dress in which I came down to the drawing-room after tea. It was the hour when Mamma read to me. The curtains were drawn, the lamplight was soft, and the fire burning brightly.

Suddenly we heard the wheels of my father's dog-cart and the short sharp click of his China pony's hoofs, which ring so differently from those of a long-legged horse.

Papa came in looking rather excited.

'Edith,' he said to my mother, 'the houseboat must be ready to go up-country tomorrow morning. The Duke of Clarence and Prince George are going to use it for their shooting trip.'

'My dear Tom,' cried Mamma, 'the quilts are not fit to be seen! I can't have the Queen's grandsons use them as they are now!'

As she spoke, she rang the bell and told the boy who answered it to call the butler. While we were waiting for the great man, Papa explained that the young English princes, one of whom is now King George V of England, had suddenly decided upon this shooting trip up-country, and that our beloved boat the Ariadne had been chosen for their use.

'Zee Butler' appeared. (He never just entered a room, he always ceremoniously *appeared*.) The situation was put before him.

'How fashion can do?' cried my mother anxiously.

'Zee Butler' smiled.

'Can do,' he replied briefly. My parents sighed with relief. No inquiry was necessary as to how he was to materialize in one night two new quilts, and no one was surprised when next morning beautifully wadded quilts of crimson silk shot with blue were ready to be taken to the houseboat in Papa's red-wheeled dogcart.

I may say here that when we finally retired from China, Papa started our butler as a dairyman in reward for his long faithful service, and for years 'Zee Butler' was one of the principal dairymen in Shanghai.

All this time I haven't said anything about school — because there was none. I went to the convent for French. I had a German governess who taught me German, which indeed I spoke before I spoke English. Mamma taught me reading, writing, and arithmetic, especially the last, at which she was exceptionally good, and at which I have always been exceptionally dull. So every morning after breakfast there was a battle royal between Mamma and me in the field of mental arithmetic.

#### THE CHILD TRAVELS TO AMERICA

By this time I was about nine, and, a veritable cavalcade, we started, by way of the Suez Canal, for Europe, thence across the Atlantic to America. This, of course, was not my first long journey. I had already been round the world several times, and every summer we travelled

up the China coast to escape the heat of the Yangtze Valley.

I have used the word 'cavalcade.' It was one, indeed. There was Papa, there was Mamma, there was myself, and to take care of me — although she liked my young brother much better — was Lena, the German governess. There was my little brother Geoffrey; a baby sister Marjorie with her Amah. There was Ah Ming in his long blue cotton robe and pigtail; he took care of everybody. And last, but most important, there was the Amah's teapot in its padded straw case. The Amah's teapot was always getting lost, and without it she would not budge.

Oh, that teapot! It went astray in Italy, it was left in the train in France, in London a helmeted policeman rescued it, and I'm sure Papa breathed a sigh of relief when at long last it was safely deposited in Boston. By the time we reached that city with its gilded State House dome, the cavalcade was even larger than before. Papa had bought two sporting dogs in England, a retriever and a pointer — Herbert and Edward.

#### THE CHILD IN BOSTON

We spent a winter in Boston, and it was an epoch-making winter for me. For the first time I went to school, and for the first time I knew what it was to have lots of friends. In China, European children were very few, and Chinese children of the educated classes did not entertain European children, nor, if we *had* met, could we have talked with one another, for I spoke no Chinese, and their parents would, at that time, never have dreamed of allowing them to learn any of the bar-

barous languages of Europe. We all spoke pidgin English with the Chinese staff.

Pidgin English, a language which has grown up gradually, is easier than plain English for the Chinese to understand because the construction is exactly that of Chinese: one first states clearly the subject of one's conversation, and then elaborates. For instance, ordinarily speaking we would say, 'There is a large, handsome, beautifully cushioned, bright blue motor-car.' If one were speaking pidgin English, however, one would say: 'motor-car have got, b'long [the word used for 'it is'] too much large, number one handsome, inside have got, velly good cushion, colour b'long blue.' The language was first talked by the European traders in Canton, but is slowly dying out. As a child I spoke it fluently and have done so ever since.

After the cavalcade had settled down in Boston, it attracted immense interest — especially the Chinese members thereof in their native costume, Amah in her trousers and Ah Ming in his long blue robe. I remember one Saturday morning when Mamma took me down into the kitchen. This was a great treat, for in China neither Mamma nor I ever entered our kitchen. There, the cook, a fat old Chinese, always came to the dining-room for his orders. However, in Boston things were different. On this morning to our amazement we found, sitting at the kitchen table enjoying a hearty breakfast, a large, cheerful, and very disreputable tramp. At our entrance he looked up good-naturedly and said, pointing with his thumb towards Ah Ming, 'It's all right, Missus, the lady in the blue dress asked me in.'

Poor Ah Ming! Mamma noticed that he went out

less and less, and at last discovered that the quite natural interest which his blue gown excited embarrassed him so much that rather than face the curious crowds in the streets he stayed at home day after day. So Papa sent him to get himself some American clothes. I shall never forget Ah Ming's reappearance!

We were all sitting in the library when there was a timid knock at the door. Making himself as small as possible — he was at largest only about as big as a minute — Ah Ming slid sheepishly through the barest crack and stood revealed in a grey flannel coat and trousers, his pigtail wrapped round his head, and a felt hat with a wide brim held in both hands. Never was there a more unhappy Chinese boy! To begin with, he who was so exceedingly polite always, was now much against his will committing two unpardonable rudenesses. In China a man of good breeding always wears his hat in the house. And it is considered very rude to wind the pigtail round the head.

Piteously aware that he was committing these two enormities of bad conduct, Ah Ming shrank back against the door and waited mutely, with shamed eyes, for the verdict. Papa gave it unhesitatingly. Striving to suppress his mirth he said, 'So fashion never can. More better chop chop puttee Chinese clothes.'

Radiant with relief, Ah Ming vanished like a flash to put on his blue robe, and the grey flannel suit was never seen again.

#### CHINA AGAIN

'Days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months,' as the Chinese story-tellers say, and it was time for the



cavalcade to start once more for China. It set sail from San Francisco in the late autumn. Our ship, the smart new Arabic, was expected to do the trans-Pacific journey to Yokohama in the then unbelievably short time of seventeen days! But from the moment we left the Golden Gate the wind was ahead and the weather was — beyond speech. Day after day the ship climbed the green waves, trembled for a moment on the crest, and slid down into the valley on the farther side. One of my most vivid recollections is of the ship lying in the trough of the sea, completely surrounded by green glass mountains. From the deck-chair in which I was firmly tied, I used to look up at them and wonder if she would ever manage to climb out again. For twenty-six mortal days this went on. Captain Perrin, who seemed to me a very old grey man, looked sterner and greyer at every meal. But as the ship finally neared Yokohama, he appeared in full-dress uniform to celebrate our deliverance. I gazed with awe at the profusion of gold braid on his long frock coat and saw with surprise that he looked not much older than Papa. It was only afterward that I learned we entered port with only six hours' coal left in the ship.

As we lay in the port an absurd incident happened. A Japanese, most beautifully dressed in European clothes (which at that time was unusual), had come down to meet the ship. A few drops of rain fell. He looked up in apprehension at the sky, down in consternation at his clothes — and proceeded to take them off! One by one coat, waistcoat, collar, necktie, shirt — even trousers — came off and were folded neatly in a large purple handkerchief produced from his pocket.

In the end the erstwhile dandy stood ready to brave the elements in the scant jersey which Japanese wear under the kimono.

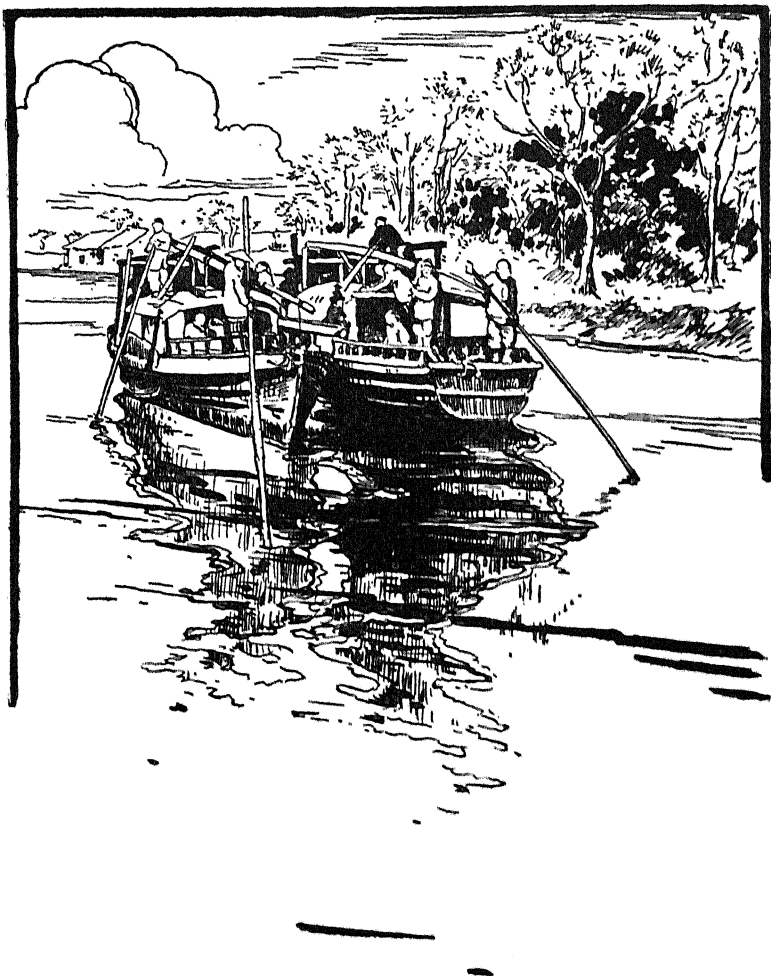
#### HOUSEBOATING IN THE YANGTZE VALLEY

Having once known the joy of many friends in Boston, I felt lonely in Shanghai and was allowed to go about more than ever before with my parents. When Mamma and Papa went up-country on shooting expeditions, they took me with them. I remember those trips so vividly. We went in houseboats up the canals.

These houseboats were very broad, flat-bottomed craft, each with a large cabin containing two berths. Behind the cabin was a little dressing-room, where Ah Ming slept on the floor. Behind that was the after deck, where the crew of five men used to squat in a circle and eat their rice cooked on a brazier. They slept under the after deck. Beyond our cabin was a little kitchen where the cook managed to produce marvellous meals, though he never seemed to bring anything with him but a round pan and a pair of chopsticks.

The boat was propelled by an enormous oar called a *yu-lo*, by which four or five Chinese standing in line and working rhythmically together sculled the boat. Meanwhile two others, pacing slowly on the towpath, drew the boat by means of ropes fastened to a wooden bar across their breasts.

By day we sat on the wide forward deck watching the level landscape glide by. In the autumn it had the deep purple brown of dead cotton stalks, in the winter it was the softer brown of old grass, and in the spring it was



HOUSEBOATS MET ON THE WAY

vivid with the yellow of rape and the pink of peach blossom.

At night, curled under one of the famous red silk quilts, I would lie listening to the soft rhythmic thud of

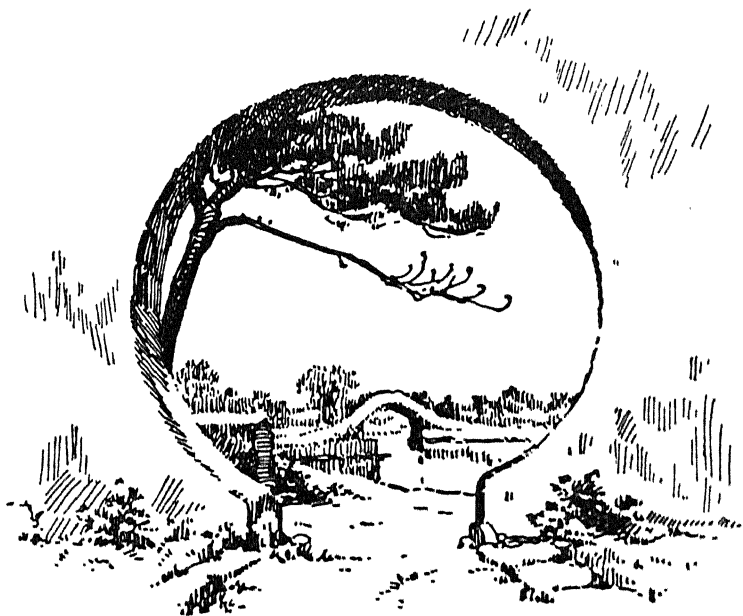
feet on the after deck as the crew swung to the *yu-lo*. The boat made scarcely a ripple as she cut through the dark glassy surface of the canal, but when she was drawn over a fish weir, the bamboos brushed under her keel with a most delicious *swish-sh-sh*.

These were the quiet nights in the country, but when we approached a market town, where the boats were crowded together on the surface of the water, the noise was like Bedlam let loose! The shrill voices of boat-women, the hoarse shouts of coolies, the scraping of bamboo poles, the bumping of boats one against another, the howling of children (who were all tethered on the decks of their floating homes by means of a harness of ropes round their padded little bodies), the crowing and cackling of chickens (also tethered), and the barking of the little watchdogs who ran up and down the decks in wildest excitement — all this deafened us as our Ariadne nosed her way in among them.

I remember one occasion when we nearly had a tragedy. We visited the large city of Hangchow on the west lake so famous for its beauty. On the return journey to the houseboat, Ah Ming somehow lost us, and when we reached the Ariadne he was nowhere to be seen. We were horrified, because Ah Ming was a Cantonese from South China and could hardly make himself understood in Hangchow, where the language spoken was entirely different. Papa was dreadfully upset and I was almost in tears.

We had intended to start at once for Shanghai, but of course we could not bear to leave Ah Ming behind. For two days Papa combed the city of Hangchow; he interviewed missionaries and magistrates and even searched

all the prisons. When there was nothing more to be done, we started sadly for home again, leaving Hangchow covered with placards offering a large reward for the finding of a Cantonese boy named Ah Ming.



A HANGCHOW GARDEN

When we reached home the door was opened — by Ah Ming! Ah Ming, smiling and neat in an immaculate starched blue robe, very relieved and happy to see us. We were speechless — except Papa, who paused only long enough to make one withering comment before he passed on into the house, leaving poor Ah Ming shrivelled to half his already diminutive size. Papa said: 'Next time more better my catchee one piece Amah take care you.'

It was Mamma who drew out the story of what really happened to Ah Ming. When he found he had lost us in the crowds of Hangchow, it had never crossed his mind that we would postpone our departure in order to look for him. He had sufficient money to hire a footboat, a tiny craft rather like a banana in shape, in which one man can sit, rowing very swiftly with both feet and hands. In this he had quickly got home to Shanghai, there to wait, wondering apprehensively what had become of *us*!

#### THE CAVALCADE MOVES ONCE MORE

Papa's remark had made Ah Ming 'lose face.' This the Chinese cannot endure. Indeed, Ah Ming felt it so deeply that when, a few months later, Papa asked him to go with us to America again, he timidly expressed his unwillingness to leave his native land.

This was rather a flying trip, and when we returned to Shanghai again, a charming young English girl had been added to the family as my governess. The battles over mental arithmetic each morning had exhausted Mamma's patience, and she thought that it would be just as well to have someone to teach me the few things I would consent to learn. Miss Cockerell was a delightful companion and she and I had a very jolly time together, besides devoting our attention to the afore-said neglected subjects. She also attempted to instil the rudiments of learning into my little brother Geoffrey, who, I may say, showed a firm opposition to becoming a sage.

It was not long, however, before Papa decided to retire from China in order that Geoffrey and I could go

to regular school, so we went 'home' to Boston to live.

Curious as it may seem, Western children who live in China always think of some place in the West as 'home.' Americans, English, French, Italians, and all the other foreigners always speak of going 'home' when they are going to their respective lands, although the visit be for no more than a few months; and even the Chinese refer to the various foreign countries as 'homeside.' I am sure that Amah and Ah Ming thought that Boston was really named 'Homeside.'

We were all greatly excited at the prospect of the journey because we were going to travel over the newly opened Canadian Pacific Railway. How well I remember the wooden trestle bridges in the cavernous ravines among the mountains! So great was the fear of fire from engine sparks that barrels of water were placed at intervals of a few feet on these bridges and men were stationed at either end ready to dash forward to put out any sparks that might fall.

There were no dining-cars in those days, so three times a day the train waited for us while we had our meals. It was an agitating proceeding, so far as I was concerned, as I never could rid myself of the fear lest the train depart and leave us behind. I would sit on my high stool, hastily trying to swallow apple pie or clam soup, listening apprehensively the while for the clanging of the bell that announced the train's departure.

#### LIFE IN BOSTON

The next ten years were spent in Boston, going to school, studying the violin, attending the opera and the

theatre. It was at this time that I came to know Amy Lowell, but of this and other friendships I shall tell later. In due course I 'came out,' went to dances and various parties, and my life was like that of other American girls. Nevertheless, I always felt as though I were a part of China, and I remember that, at the time of the short and tragic Japanese-Chinese war of 1894, I had a pitched battle of my own in the middle of a ballroom with a young man of my acquaintance. He had dared to criticize the fighting powers of the Chinese, laughing at what I consider their exceedingly sensible habit of carrying umbrellas into action. The Chinese soldier, as I hotly explained to him, used his umbrella as a tent and curled up under it at night. Looking back across the years, I can see myself standing in an interval between the dances on the shining floor of that oval-shaped ballroom, shaking my fist at that young man because in my opinion he was so completely lacking in appreciation of my beloved Chinese. I remember even the dress I was wearing. Such a lovely dress! It was petunia brocade shot with silver. The bodice was made of silk chrysanthemums coloured maroon, gold, pale pink, and cream, all veiled with spangled white tulle.

#### BACK IN SHANGHAI

China was never very far from my mind, so when in the summer of 1897 Papa said that he must go out for the winter, Mamma and I were very willing to go with him. We had been away for nearly ten years, and on first arriving in Shanghai we visited friends who still lived in the way of the old-fashioned traders — that is to say, in a Hong. A Hong is a business firm, and the



premises they use are also called their Hong. In the old days, the Hong was a self-contained establishment in which all the foreign members of the firm lived together. This one was a huge compound, with a watchman at the gate. It stood opposite the cathedral. Inside the compound were a number of buildings; the large house with deep verandahs, the offices downstairs, the residential part upstairs; behind, godowns for silk, tea, and piece-goods. The whole was surrounded by a high wall.

The Amah of the establishment was a most delightful old lady who had been with our friends for many years. She was very large and stout, which made movement on her bound feet difficult, so she liked pottering about taking care of our clothes or sitting in the tailor's room sewing. I used to delight to converse with her, and I remember one day discussing religion at great length. She expressed herself as very much interested in Christianity, so I asked her why she did not become a Christian. She sighed and laid down her work.

'Young Misse b'long so fashion,' she said. 'My just now b'long old woman. Soon must wantchee die. My glave all ready.' Her face shone with satisfaction as she described the site which had been chosen by the geomancers as her last resting-place. 'My glave b'long number one place. Winter time have got sun. Summer time have got wind.'

She then went on to describe the graveclothes which she had prepared for herself — all of excellent quality silk. The Chinese believe that the dead arrive in the other world looking exactly as they did when they left this one; therefore, it was very important to be buried in the best clothes one could afford. Well-to-do women

save their wedding dress for this purpose. But women of the poorer classes, who have to hire a bridal robe, buy themselves later in life the sober dark silk dress worn by middle-aged women on festival occasions.

The Amah was not the only important member of this household. The Number One Boy, a tall severe-looking Chinese, whose ivory face seldom betrayed emotion, managed everything and managed it in his own way — which was sometimes exceedingly irritating to his employers. I remember coming down to breakfast one morning to find our host with a slightly heightened colour and an air of suppressed triumph. When the boy left the room to fetch my bacon and eggs, my host burst out: 'Number One Boy and I have just fought Waterloo.' He paused, and added impressively — 'And I am Wellington.'

After we had spent a few weeks in this hospitable Hong, we moved to a flat on the Bund overlooking the busy Whangpoo, or Yellow Reach River. Here one could see craft of infinite variety passing all day long under our windows. One longed to flatten one's nose against the pane from morning till night watching the brown-sailed junks, and their crews in bright blue cotton clothes. There were sampans, which looked like little cockleshells dancing on the swiftly flowing river, their scarlet prows sharply upturned and their white-lacquered hoods shining in the sun. There were lumbering cargo boats tied in flotillas and drawn by puffing steam launches, merchant steamers, both coasters and ocean-going, and always the European men-of-war.

It was a very gay winter. We dined and lunched and danced almost daily, and between times I rode across

country on the white China pony which Papa gave me as a Christmas present. I remember a specially delightful fancy-dress ball, given by a group of bachelors who called themselves the 'Four and Twenty Black-birds.' Mamma, who was very clever at instructing the Chinese tailor how to carry out her ideas, wore an enchanting dress. She went as a bottle of champagne. The body of the dress was of dark green satin, the bodice was gold, while powdered hair and a white tulle ruff represented the foam. A cap made in the form of a cork surmounted the whole.

I myself went as one of a quadrille. Quadrilles were very popular in my young days. We went, four girls and four men, dressed as the four queens and the four knaves. We danced together all the evening.

But life was not all a whirl of gaiety. I was very much interested in the Chinese about me, and went sight-seeing as much as possible. It was not considered desirable to visit the native city, which at that time was unspeakably filthy, so it was very difficult for me to persuade anyone to take me there. But I was determined to go. I expressed my desire one evening to a tall Englishman who sat next to me at dinner, and he cordially invited me to make an expedition with him. I induced Papa to agree to my going, and set off with my escort (who, though I had no idea of it then, was later to be my husband). It was my first glimpse of the overhanging houses, the brilliantly painted shops hung with signs made of cotton cloth or painted wood. The crowds were almost overpowering and the shrill cries of vendors mingled with the imprecations of carriers who thrust their way through the masses of humanity,

their burdens dangling from the long carrying-poles across their shoulders.

Although later I came to love the walled Chinese city, I must confess that my first impression was rather one of revulsion. The unbelievably narrow, roughly cobbled streets were slippery with filth and the smells were noisome. But worst of all were the beggars. I did not know at that time that beggary is a trade in China, and my heart was wrung by the miserable creatures who displayed their deformities as they crouched by the roadside. Their dreadful and monotonous cries rang in my ears so persistently that next day I insisted that my unfortunate escort should go back and carry money to a particularly pathetic old woman whom we had seen.

Just before leaving for Boston again, I became engaged to this very escort, so when I sailed down the Whangpoo, I knew that I should soon be coming back again. And, indeed, in less than a year I arrived once more in Shanghai, this time as a bride.

#### LIFE AS A BRIDE IN SHANGHAI

Our first anxiety was to find a home, because the Hong where my husband had been living had lately been sold, and in all the thickly settled quarter of Shanghai there seemed no roof to cover a newly married pair. The pleasanter outlying districts were impractical as no street cars existed at that time.

The introduction of street cars was, however, at that moment being discussed, and it passed my comprehension that anyone could object to having them. In this connection, I remember an occasion when I disgraced myself. It was at a huge race tiffin. At least twenty-

five guests were sitting at the largest round table I had ever seen. Beside me was a charming elderly gentleman, head of a large Hong, member of the municipal council, one of the most respected members of society, who, to my amazement, insisted that the advent of street cars would be a disadvantage to Shanghai. I began to argue hotly. A few moments later, I became aware that a silence had fallen on the rest of the table, and to my horror heard my own voice, loud and clear, announcing to my astonished neighbour, 'You might just as well have come out of the ark!'

#### SOME MEMBERS OF OUR STAFF

Some years later, street cars were installed, but meanwhile we had been obliged to have our own pony and carriage, as the house we had taken was out of town. Our pony, named Protector, was a character. He was a dun, with a black stripe down his spine, and had come from Mongolia with a 'mob of griffins.' 'Griffin' is the name given to the shaggy-haired, long-tailed, untamed ponies driven down each spring and autumn from the grassy plains of the North. Protector had been bought and trained as a race pony. He was very fast and amazingly strong, and had he wished could undoubtedly have won 'The Champions' — the chief race of the Shanghai course. But such effort was not to his taste. The first time he ran, he won; apparently in spite of himself. The jockey dropped off his back in a state of exhaustion, exclaiming, 'If two men rode him, he would win anything! But no one man can push him past the post.'

I often felt that a donkey must have existed some-

where in Protector's family tree, as his characteristics were those of a mule. One flick of the whip was sufficient to make him stop dead. But if I cooed at him in dulcet tones he would deign to draw the brougham at quite a respectable rate. He and Number One Mafoo, who sat curled up on the carriage box and the moment we stopped whipped out a tiny Chinese novel to read, added greatly to the amusement of my days.

Amah, who is still in my employ, came to me the day after I reached Shanghai as a bride. For over a quarter of a century, she has been a kind but firm dictator and has ruled the conduct of my life. As a matter of fact, she ruled the household, because Number One Boy, supposedly the head of the domestic staff, was not only much younger than she, but was also related to her. Moreover, she had proposed him for the post.

When Amah came to me, she was still quite young. She was a widow, and her only son had been left at the family home in Ning-Po. She was quite pretty, according to Chinese standards; that is to say, her face was very round, her creamy skin was very smooth, her eyes were properly slanted, and, best of all, her bound feet were very small. When she walked the house shook. This was because, since the whole front part of the foot is broken back under the heel, the 'lily-footed lady' is simply walking on stumps. This seems to us a very horrible deformity, but only a year or two ago, Amah held forth to me at length on how hideous she thought the unbound feet of the modern Chinese girl. Very definite in her opinions is Amah, as the various stories I shall tell about her in the pages to come will show.

## THE BOXER YEAR

At the time of the Boxer Rising, we were living in a little house which I had jokingly christened 'The Moated Grange' because it was approached by a bridge over a creek. Chinese names and thought as yet meant nothing to me, for I was still engrossed in my new domestic happiness. But it was impossible not to be stirred to the depths by the events that crowded upon us in the summer of 1900.

In the spring of that year a curious incident happened which was later thought by the Chinese about us to have had a bearing on subsequent events. Suddenly, on a day that gave no hint of storm, a darkness which lasted about fifteen minutes spread over the land. Men and beasts were terrified at this unexplained happening, and later the populace declared that during the darkness the 'Boxers' had come down from the sky.

The story of their rising is a page of history which can be read fully elsewhere. But I can give you a glimpse of what was happening round us at this time. In brief, then, the Boxers were a band of youths who believed themselves to have magic powers. They declared that neither bullets nor swords could injure them and they were fanatically anti-Christian and anti-foreign. For reasons too complicated to explain, the Empress Dowager and the Imperial Clan encouraged them, and the position of foreigners — to say nothing of the unfortunate Chinese Christians who were massacred in thousands — was therefore very dangerous.

The trouble was most serious in the North, and on June 13, forces of Boxers wearing red sashes and armed

with swords and spears rushed into Peking. Events crowded upon one another and we in the Yangtze Valley read with amazement of what took place.

The German Minister, on his way to a meeting arranged by the Chinese authorities, was murdered in the street, and his murderer obtained special promotion and reward. News came that the Empress Dowager herself was reported to have said: 'The insults of these foreigners pass all bounds! Let us exterminate them before we eat our morning meal.'

By June 20 the Legations in Peking were besieged and it was impossible to learn whether the people there incarcerated were alive or dead. We were dreadfully anxious, for the rumours flying back and forth were terrifying. Although we did not know it until later, the reason that the trouble did not reach the South was that two courageous Chinese officials in Peking changed the famous 'Extermination Edict,' so that instead of reading, as the Empress intended it should do, 'Kill all foreigners,' it read 'Save all foreigners.' They, poor men, lost their heads; but we in the South were saved.

Everyone's nerves, however, were stretched and I shall never forget the night when Mamma, who with Papa was paying us a visit, roused us all in the dead of night and declared that she had seen cannons being drawn down the road in front of the house. My husband went out to investigate and discovered that logs were being taken to a neighbouring woodyard! Poor Mamma. We laughed her to scorn, but as a matter of fact, we had all felt a peculiar sensation in the middle of our persons at the thought of cannons so near our door.



Although no fighting occurred near us, the troops of the various nations whose citizens were shut up in Peking, all assembled in Shanghai before travelling North, and the great review which took place on the race-course in front of Field Marshal General von Waldersee was a remarkable sight.

As the sacred person of the German Minister had suffered insult and death, the Germans had a more vital interest than anyone else. Besides, there was no other Field Marshal in the Far East, so he, sitting high on his horse in a most gorgeous uniform, took the salute. Before him marched his own men performing their goose step in a wonderful way; then came a great variety of Indian troops, some on magnificent horses; French colonial troops from Annam, the large fat officers looking too absurd on tiny Annamite ponies. There were British troops, too, and lots of Americans; there were also Japanese and last, but in our eyes by no means least, our own brave Volunteers.

#### WILD GOOSE HAPPINESS HOUSE

After the Boxer troubles — that is to say, in the following year — Papa said to me one day, ‘Would you like me to build you a house?’

Naturally I was immensely excited and preparations at once began. We explored the surroundings of Shanghai and finally chose a piece of ground which seemed to us delightful. It was far out of Shanghai and I saw possibilities of making a large garden.

There was nothing very original about the plan, as my idea was to make it as much like an American house as possible. How well I succeeded may be judged by



A CHINESE GARDEN

the fact that a globe-trotter who was visiting me looked round her and remarked, 'Dear me! I declare I might think myself in Bar Harbor, Maine.'

My husband agreed with me, however, that the name

at least should be Chinese, and we asked the advice of his Comprador, who was the head of the Chinese staff in the office and the go-between of the foreign and native merchants.

He was deeply interested in our plans and suggested various names. The one he urged on us was 'The Hall of Purple Delights.' But the one we more prosaic Westerners chose was, *Hung Fo Zah*, 'Great Happiness House,' and it was not until years later, when I began to study Chinese, that I realized that the character *Hung*, which he had chosen for 'Great,' means primarily wild goose. Because the wild goose is the bird of limitless spaces, it means limitless or great. Thereupon I at once changed the English translation, and the name of our home became 'Wild Goose Happiness House.'

#### I BEGIN TO STUDY CHINESE

It was by a pure chance that I began the study of Chinese. My friends didn't do it; and one is much like a sheep in such matters, especially when one is young and absorbed. Once or twice I did speak of beginning, but cold water was always thrown on my plans. 'Oh, I wouldn't! Jenks studied the language and soon went mad!' 'Study Chinese? Don't be such a fool — you will certainly lose your wits if you do.' Such were the remarks that met my proposals, so I let the matter rest, and the years rolled on.

Finally, in the summer of 1905, during a spell of intense heat, a friend of ours, a little old Bishop, came to visit us. He was a sad, disappointed little man with a grizzled beard. He looked indeed rather like a pixie, only pixies are apt to smile, and he only worried! One

hot day succeeded another and the thermometer rose until it reached 103° Fahrenheit, where it stayed. The little Bishop in his black cloth gaiters looked too miserable for words.

Finally I begged him to adopt some other attire. 'If you can bear to wear the gaiters,' I said, 'it is all very well, but *I* can't bear to look at them.'

'Would you really not mind if I changed?' asked he, and promptly trotted upstairs to act upon his words; coming down shortly in a pair of sensible black alpaca trousers.

I had succeeded in making his person more comfortable, but to set his mind at ease seemed beyond me! At last I had a happy thought, inspired by a dear little pocket dictionary which he owned. 'Will you not teach me to use a Chinese dictionary?' I begged.

He was perfectly delighted to do so. We drove to town in the brougham because it was really too hot for the victoria (even strong Protector trotted in a very leisurely manner), and bought a copy of the dictionary for me. It is called 'The Student's Four Thousand Tzŭ' and 'General Pocket Dictionary,' by W. E. Soothill, and is still my beloved, though sadly thumbed, companion.

And so I began to tread the stony path of Chinese learning, led by a sad, disappointed little Bishop whom I tried to keep from brooding over things which had gone awry. Naturally we did not progress very far; he sailed for England, and I pottered away with the dictionary alone. Not until several years later did I take the great step of engaging a Chinese teacher.

Mr. Hsü, my first pedagogue, was a slim and vener-

able person. Besides his deep Chinese learning, he possessed a little English and was regarded with awe by the staff. I remember one day he was asked to advise on some matter of building. He and I, accompanied by Number One Boy, and followed by gardeners, mafoos, and builders, proceeded to the spot in question. A ladder was produced and Teacher Hsü solemnly mounted. Everybody was alarmed. Number One Boy and several others held the ladder; Amah, who was always present when anything was up, gave directions, and there arose a perfect chorus of '*Hsiao hsin! Hsiao hsin!*' — 'Little heart! Little heart!' — the Chinese way of saying 'Take care! Take care!' I had been up that ladder a dozen times and no one had bothered about me, but with a scholar it was another matter!

Teacher Hsü went away to Hankow and was succeeded by Teacher Wang, who, although not very learned from a Chinese point of view, had a wonderful talent for acting! He told me dramatic stories — with action; hiding behind my chair to represent a tiger in his hole, or striding about waving his arms when he took the part of both armies in a battle.

Teacher Wang, although amusing, was not very satisfactory (he knew nothing of poetry, for instance), so I found a certain Teacher Chang, a very grave person with a great sense of his own importance. He had accompanied a British diplomatic mission to Tibet as interpreter, and being so travelled himself had a scorn for his country-people who were less well informed. One day when we were looking at a picture of a dog of Fo with its curly mane, he said with ineffable scorn: 'People — Chinese people — think that it is a lion! But I, who have *seen* a lion, know better!'

Even Mr. Chang did not provide a truly sympathetic feeling for poetry, so when I began the work on my book of poems, 'Fir Flower Tablets,' translated from the Chinese, I sought further still for an interpreter of this art. A venerable old Manchu gentleman was the first candidate I tried, but work with him was *hopeless*, and the mistakes he made were devastating. It seemed hard-hearted to tell him that he must go, as I knew he was in want, and, after the Chinese Revolution had broken out, it was very difficult for a Manchu to find any post. Treated as aliens, hounded from pillar to post, they had a miserable time. I felt, however, that my translation was too near my heart to be sacrificed even to charity, so I steeled myself to the necessity and searched once more. At last what my husband calls my 'confounded perseverance' was requited — I found Teacher Nung, of whom much more later, and from him I gained nine tenths of the knowledge I have.

#### HONORARY LIBRARIAN OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

All this while my interest in things Chinese had been growing. And in 1907, I had a new activity, in addition to my own studies. I became the Honorary Librarian of the Royal Asiatic Society, a post which I filled with great pleasure, to myself at least, for sixteen years. I did not feel in the least adequate to work in such a learned society. The other members on the council were all venerable gentlemen noted in the field of scholarship. But the way it came about was as follows: I went one day to the library of the society and the amiable young Chinese in charge allowed me, although I was not a member, to take away several valuable

books. I tried in vain to find the library open that I might return them. I felt the books heavy on my conscience and, as he happened to take me in to dinner one night, told the secretary of the society, a very learned gentleman indeed, of my plight.

He talked at length about books, about the library, about Chinese matters in general, and about the difficulties of administering the library in particular, and I parted from him feeling my already keen interest a thousand times keener. I determined to join the society and read everything possible about China.

A day or two later, the telephone rang and at the other end I heard the voice of the British Consul-General, a delightful old gentleman who tempered his scholarship with humour and who looked benevolently at the world through a monocle. He was a great friend of mine, and I always rejoiced when he brought 'Damn-It,' his beloved spaniel, to tea.

Upon this occasion his voice came clearly over the wires; he said: 'We had a meeting of the R.A.S. Council this afternoon and we decided to ask you to become Honorary Librarian and recatalogue the library.'

'Why, Sir Pelham!' I replied, 'I know nothing about cataloguing books.'

'Neither do any of us,' he answered cheerily, 'and you have more time to learn than we have!'

The long and short of it was that I agreed to fill the post. Of course, if we had been in America or England, where professional librarians were to be had, this would have been absurd, but as it was, some inexperienced person had to do it and I was very fortunate in being the one chosen. One of the great advantages of living

far from the centre of things is that one has all sorts of opportunities denied to people who live where professionals can be turned to at any moment.

The library was not large, but held the most important books on China and the Far East, and, in spite of many agonizing moments when trying to decide where a book should be placed, I enjoyed my work immensely. It is difficult to imagine more fascinating work than that which leads along the roads trodden by great writers of the past and present, and even though one cannot read all the books one catalogues, the mere handling of them brings an awareness of their being.

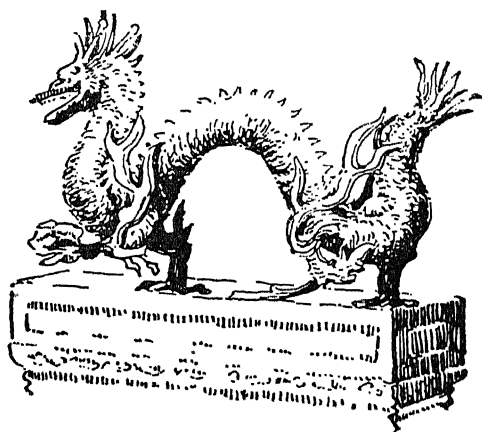
#### BUILDING THE GRASS HUT

After we had lived for twenty happy years in Wild Goose Happiness House, my husband retired from business and we decided to give up China as our headquarters. It was thus no longer practical to keep the house, and we knew we must sell it, and our adored garden, as well. However, we could not endure the thought of having no home at all in China, to which we could sometimes return, so in the end we kept a corner of the garden and there we built a house in Chinese style, calling it 'The Grass Hut.'

During the twenty years we had lived in the Wild Goose Happiness House, my knowledge of China had steadily grown. My interest in its life and thought was deep. So, with our new house, I no longer wished to reproduce anything Western. My one idea was to have it as truly Chinese as possible. Into its building I wished to put all the poetry, all the legends which the Chinese themselves put into the building of their own homes.



And day by day, as the Grass Hut by the Yellow Reach grew into reality, this dream of mine, too, became reality. The story of the building of the Grass Hut, which is still the corner of China I can call my own, follows in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER II

### PICTURES UNDER A CHINESE RIDGEPOLE

#### CHOOSING A HOUSE BY DIVINATION

By Washing-flowers Stream waters, at waters' western end,  
Because of retired pool and forest, I, the owner, have 'divined' my  
house.

I was already aware that in the outlying district dust of the world  
was rare,  
But found also a clear stream which washed clean the traveller's  
grief.

I cannot count the dragon-flies which, linked, rise up float down;  
There is a single pair of ruddy water-birds which together swim and  
dive.

The journey to the East is ten thousand *li* — this place is worthy;  
I will profit by it and rejoice....

TU FU: *The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*



## CHAPTER II

### *Pictures under a Chinese Ridgepole*

#### I BUILD THE GRASS HUT BY THE YELLOW REACH

As I have told you, for years my interest in the thoughts and the beliefs and the theories of the Chinese had been steadily growing. But until we built the Grass Hut, I had not realized how truly these thoughts and beliefs and theories were still a part of the everyday life of those around me. True, I had studied earnestly and carefully with my teacher, Nung Chu hsien shêng, which means 'Teacher Cultivator-of-Bamboos.' But I needed the building of the Grass Hut to open my eyes.

And once I had grasped the fact that there by the Yellow Reach our building foreman, his assistants, and even the little apprentices were being guided by these ancient beliefs and legends, my fascination was limitless. I watched each little step of the work. I plied Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos with questions. I rushed to the Royal Asiatic Society for books which would explain this or that.

And I promptly began a journal about it all. Into this journal I put a record of just what was being done, step by step, to create for my husband and me a real Chinese home. But as I went along, I added, as well, this or that ancient legend that was leaping into life, there by the Yellow Reach. I wrote of the old, old beliefs that still held sway. And it is part of this journal of mine which I shall now give you in the hope that you

may see what I saw and come under something of the same spell.

#### PLANNING THE GRASS HUT

During the Period of Slight Heat

Eleven hundred and sixty-four years ago, the poet Tu Fu and his family arrived in Chêngtu, capital of Szechuen. They had fled from before the Mongol tribes which were devastating the Empire and had suffered many hardships on the way. So when they arrived in the Embroidered City, as the writers call Chêngtu, they were thankful to find a peaceful corner in a quiet suburb, and there Tu Fu built his Grass-Hut-on-the-Washed-Flowers-Stream. Students often refer to their houses as *Ts'ao T'ang*, 'Grass Huts,' whether they are actually of the thatched variety or not, so I have chosen Tu Fu's house as the prototype for mine, which will be the Grass-Hut-by-the-Yellow-Reach.

I only wish that I could adopt his principles in building mine. When he arrived in Chêngtu, he chose his site by the aid of divination and then wrote charming little poems to his various friends asking for this, that, and the other, to place in his Grass Hut.

Methods by the Yellow Reach are more prosaic: the Municipal Council issues a permit and sends overseers to supervise the work, which must reach a certain standard, and people nowadays would hardly respond to poems even if I could write them. However, all the preliminaries have been accomplished, and as I write, strains of the workmen's song float towards me through the shimmering heat of a July day. The workmen are pounding down the foundations. The process is in-

teresting and the song they sing full of rhythm. A gang of men, under a foreman, lift and drop alternately a heavy block of wood like a pile-driver, and it is by means of the song that unity of effort is preserved.

The foreman sings an extempore verse, about anything in the world that may take his fancy and the men pound rhythmically and dully as he does so, but when he stops, they all join in a frenzied chorus of meaningless sounds, doubling the time of their beats and causing the heavy block to dance along the surface of broken bricks and semi-liquid mortar. I wonder what they are singing about at the Grass Hut? The other day a friend of mine met a charming English girl beside a plot of ground where building was in progress. Her hair was of the proverbial 'spun gold' and her eyes 'like violets under water,' but this was the song he heard the builders sing:

*Foreman:* There is a foreign woman — a foreign woman.

*Men:* Ah — ai — ah — ai — ah.

*Foreman:* Her hair — her hair — her hair — it is the colour — the colour of straw.

*Men:* Ah — ai — ah — ai — ah — ai.

*Foreman:* Her eyes — her eyes — her eyes —

*Men:* Ah — ai — ah — ai — ah.

*Foreman:* Her eyes are like an old blue coat.

*Men:* Ah — ai — ah — ai — ah.

*Foreman:* Like an old blue coat, a beggar would throw away.

The plan of my hut is simple. A series of alternating courtyards and buildings. The first house will consist of reception rooms, the second of bedrooms, and two of servants' quarters and offices. There is to be no upper



story, so the indoor and outdoor rooms will all be on the ground. I continually reiterate that it is to be like the cottages of Kiangsu, and that I want to observe all time-honoured customs while it is being built.

The contractor seems a nice man, but as he only talks the Shanghai dialect, all my communications with him are through the Boy, in pidgin English. His name is Ping Yung, and he is most dramatic when he talks. Although he can neither read nor write, he is, I believe, a wonderful story-teller, and tells long historical tales, impersonating men or women, greybeards or brave warriors, with equal ease. We had a discussion over placing the garage, which is of course not an integral part of the Kiangsu cottage, and finally decided on a suitable corner facing the road beside the Great Gate. I suggested that it should be of the plainest description, with none of the decoration which is to adorn the rest.

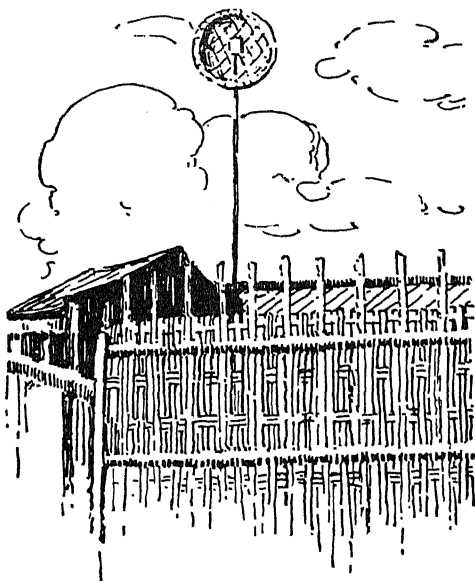
Ping Yung thought earnestly for some time and then said, 'How can the East-Household-Lady ask such a thing? It will stand by the road; everybody will see it; and they will think that the house is like a person who wears a fine coat but a poor waistcoat. No, the garage should look as though it were a garden pavilion, is this not so?'

His argument was unanswerable. The East-Household-Lady meekly acquiesced, and it was decided that the garage should have a beautiful roof with a crane of longevity perched in the centre. I may remark parenthetically that 'East-Household-Lady' is a polite form of address to the mistress of the house. A host always sits facing south, and the place of honour is on his left



hand. The east is, therefore, an honourable position and the Master of a house is called 'East-Household.'

To return to the building. This is always supposed by Chinese to be rather a dangerous proceeding. The mere fact of moving earth is in their eyes questionable.



HIGH BAMBOO POLE WITH BASKETWORK SEVEI

There is no knowing what spirits may be disturbed; and if they are disturbed, they will in all probability wreak vengeance on someone. The workmen, therefore, tie a bunch of boughs to the end of each scaffolding pole, hoping that any mischievous elves may mistake the building site for a grove of trees and pass it by. I notice, too, that the people in the next-door village have erected a high bamboo pole and have hung from

the top a large flat basket-work sieve, such as is used for sifting earth, with a mirror fastened to the centre. It is well known that only good influences can pass through a sieve, and that a mirror has the power of turning evil influences into good fortune. I hope that this may prove to be the case and that our good neighbours behind the warp and woof of their bamboo fences may not suffer disaster from our building operations.

#### THE HOUSES OF CHINA

Chinese houses are built upon the same principle as our reinforced concrete buildings — that is, the framework which supports the roof is first placed in position and the walls are filled in afterward. The framework is of wood and the parts must first be carefully prepared and mortised together, so the ridgepole cannot be raised until some little time after the foundations are pounded in. As a rule, no nails are used in the construction of a Chinese house, and those required to nail down the non-Chinese floor boards we intend to have are an extra item in the contract.

In China, the rich use a paving of tiles or fine stone, and the poor are content with Mother Earth for their flooring. The woodwork takes some time to make ready, as in Kiangsu the transverse beams of the guest-hall are usually carved with historical scenes and figures of legendary and actual characters. It is the custom to devote the principal beam, facing south, to a scene from the life of some hero whom one especially admires; Chu-ko Liang, the wise and self-effacing minister of Liu Pei, is very popular, and so is Kuo Tzū-i, the saviour of the T'ang Dynasty; but I have chosen

Yo Fei, who is, to me, one of the most sympathetic characters in Chinese history.

He lived at the close of the Sung Dynasty and was terribly distressed at the supine conduct of the Emperor, who would not support him in his effort to drive back the Golden Tartars who were then invading China. As a matter of fact, the Emperor was completely under the influence of the Prime Minister Ch'in Kuei, who in his turn was in the pay of the Golden Tartars.

One of their officers wrote Ch'in Kuei privately, saying: 'You are always talking of "peace, peace, peace," and at the same time here in the North Yo Fei does nothing but fight, fight, fight. Kill him, and then there will be peace.'

So Ch'in Kuei spun a web of treachery about Yo Fei and contrived that he should be thrown into prison on various trumped-up charges. His case was at once investigated, and, when being questioned by the Imperial Envoy, Yo Fei took off his coat and showed four large characters which his mother had tattooed on his back when he was a boy: *Ch'in chung pao kuo* ('To the last loyal in defence of the country'). Nothing could be proved against him nor against his son Yo Yün, who also was a prisoner, so one day Ch'in Kuei called a messenger and sent a very small 'writing' into the prison addressed to the head jailer; whereupon the jailer, in a memorial to the Throne, reported that Yo Fei was dead. This was on the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth Moon, A.D. 1141. Snow was falling and it was very cold.

The beam in my Guest-Hall shows the scene when Yo Fei bares his back. It is carved on the south side of

the southern beam, and I fear that its position will be so high and honourable that no one will see it. On the back of the southern beam is a large group showing Yo Fei's son, at the battle of Ox Head Hill, and on the front of the north beam Chao Yün, a hero at the time of the Three Kingdoms, is seen escaping from the battle-field of the Long Sloping Bank, with Liu Pei's infant son safely tucked in the fold of his coat. The short beams at the sides show a whole galaxy of my friends, such as Li T'ai-po, the poet; Wang Hsi-chih, the wonderful calligraphist; the Ho Ho twins, who died of laughter in their joy over inventing the abacus; the Eight Immortals, who live among the peach trees of the Western Paradise; and so on.

The carving is in fairly high relief and the background is darkened, so the figures, which are uncoloured, stand out very clearly. Workmen came from the city to carve the beams and worked with great speed, sureness, and freedom. A slight outline in black ink was all they had to guide them. At one time it seemed rather doubtful whether the carving would be ready for the appointed day, so enormous arc lights were hung in the working-shed, and the woodcarvers worked throughout several nights. Everything was in readiness for the ceremony this morning.

Feast for the Patron Saint  
Twenty-Sixth Day of the Sixth Moon

It has been a brilliant day of intense heat. The sky was that marvellous delphinium blue which one often sees in Central China, and a strong fresh breeze blew enormous billowy clouds up from out of the Yellow Sea.

By ten o'clock the whole countryside had assembled, and kept up a continuous beating of gongs, clashing of cymbals, and popping of firecrackers. Light and fire are supposed to be destructive to spirits which are accustomed to the World of Shade. This being the case, fire, candles, and lanterns are used by the whole Chinese nation as a protection from evil.

To increase the awe-inspiring effect of bonfires, it is said that in the Dark Ages pieces of bamboo which produced a crackling, popping noise were thrown into the flames. Later, tubes of paper filled with gunpowder took the place of bamboos, and these have developed into the firecrackers of infinite variety in use today. I suppose that the terrifying effect of noise is at the root of the conviction that drums, cymbals, and gongs are a protection against demons. At all events, noise-making in China is a work of merit. The din this morning was well organized; and, let us hope, effective.

In front of the space which will be the Guest-Hall a chair was placed facing south. It held a long strip of paper stamped with a brightly coloured portrait of Lu Pan, Patron Saint of Carpenters. In real life he was a youth named Pan, of the K'ung Clan, living in the State of Lu, about 400 B.C. During his apprenticeship he devoted himself to the arts of sculpture, drawing, and the chiselling of metal. He made plans of palaces, built boats, carts, and various contrivances. It is said that he married a lady named Cloud who was skilful in the making of artistic vases.

At the age of forty, he became a hermit on Mount Li and was there initiated into secrets of sorcery, which enabled him to float about the world on a cloud and to

move with ease to the heavenly regions. He is also said to have made wooden magpies that could fly.

With Chang Pan, Patron Saint of Masons, he is supposed to have built a palace in the peach gardens of the Jade Emperor, and carpenters say that when the pillars of Heaven were menaced with ruin, Lu Pan was entrusted with the task of repairing them. During the Ming Dynasty, about A.D. 1415, a thousand years after his death, he was given the title 'Great Master and Support of the Empire,' and it is said that his spirit will certainly give ear to prayers offered by artisans.

The feast spread before Lu Pan's effigy this morning was of a most complicated nature. Every item on the menu had a very distinct reason for being there. Number Two Boy, by virtue of his past career as a teacher, always acts as Master of Ceremonies on occasions of pomp, and from the first streak of dawn he was hurrying about attending to various details.

He has given me the following inventory. It reads:

Lu Pan, First Instructor. Raising the ridgepole on a fortunate day. Items prepared:

A Complete Happiness:

This is a strip of scarlet paper upon which the words, 'May great joy come on raising the beam,' are written. It is pasted to the ridgepole before the rites begin.

A Pair of Geese:

Emblems of conjugal fidelity.

A Pair of Fish:

Because the word *yü*, fish, is a homonym of *yü*, a surplus or excess, the fish has become a symbol of riches.

**Guarantee Prosperity Dumplings:**

Steamed cakes made of rice flour. These played an important part during the ceremony.

**A Pig's Head:**

A play on word-sounds turns the porker's head into a symbol of profitable trade.

**Bean Curd:**

The word *fu*, curd, is a homonym of *fu*, happiness, and is therefore used to suggest joy.

**Tribute Candles:**

Candles are, as a rule, red, but in this case green were preferred. Red suggests fire and might therefore be dangerous.

**Ingots of Silver:**

Spirit money to be burned for Lu Pan's use on the return journey to the World of Shade.

**Sandalwood Fragrance:**

Incense-sticks for use on the said return journey.

**Long Life Fragrance:**

Pieces of sandalwood filled an incense-burner placed in the centre of the table. These were lighted before the ceremony began, so when the crowd assembled, the whole air was filled with sweet scent from clouds of smoke curling in the sunlight.

**Ascend to the Heights:**

Huge firecrackers, capable of terrifying any demon!

**Braids from Han:**

Strings of tiny firecrackers which were originally a specialty of Hankow.

**Onions, Soy Bean Curd, and Salt:**

These are considered the ingredients of a well-balanced diet and are therefore used to express the wish: 'Wind harmonious, rain in accordance with'; that is, 'wind and rain in proper quantities and at proper times' — a normal desire for a people who consider agriculture the chief business of life.

The Lucky Grass, an Omen of Prosperity:

A great bunch of sweet-flag leaves.

Red of the Senior Classic:

The name of a delicious wine. Every three years examinations of graduate scholars of the Third Degree were held in the Palace, and the man who won first place was called *Chuang Yüan*, Senior Classic.

Before the Rain:

Name of a very delicate tea, made from leaves picked early in the season.

Ten Thousand Years Green:

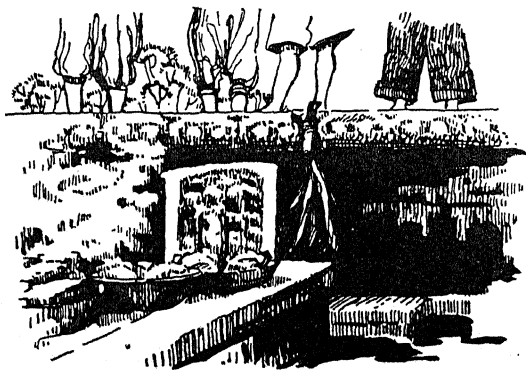
A bunch of evergreen leaves, emblem of longevity; also used in a congratulatory sense because of a play on words: *ch'ing*, green, has the same sound as *ch'ing*, to congratulate.

A Peak Nest:

An ornament in the shape of a gilt lotus flower destined to be placed in the centre of the ridgepole.

#### RAISING THE RIDGEPOLE

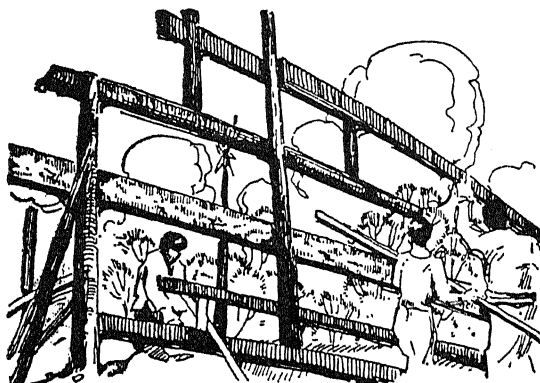
The ridgepole itself lay behind Lu Pan's chair. A charming design decorated the centre. A gilt-edged



THE RIDGEPOLE ITSELF



green band crossed and re-crossed a scarlet background, thus forming oval spaces, and in the oval spaces were



THE SIDE FRAMES TO HOLD THE RIDGEPOLE

written green 'ward off fire' characters, forming the antithetical phrases:

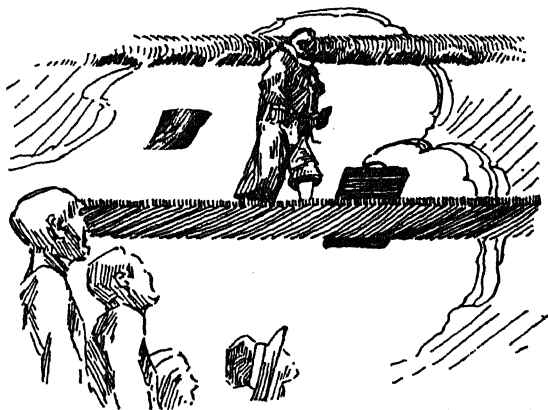
On the ridgepole suspended above, a thousand years of wealth and rank.

On the post that stands erect, ten thousand generations of splendour and glory.

After the side frames, which were to hold the ridgepole, had been securely mortised together, the ceremony began. Ping Yung filled a tiny cup with Red of Senior Classic and set it before Lu Pan, just sipping it himself; he then came south of the table and knelt for a long time on a stool facing the Patron Saint, bowing his head at intervals to the ground. He was very neatly dressed in a suit of dark brown 'engraved material': this is a silk woven with tiny holes in a fine pattern; when finished, a glaze of dark brown or black varnish gives a stiffness

that keeps it from sticking to the body. A coat and trousers of engraved cloth are worn during the great heat with nothing under them, and are very cool. Air passes freely through the mesh, but being opaque it is perfectly modest.

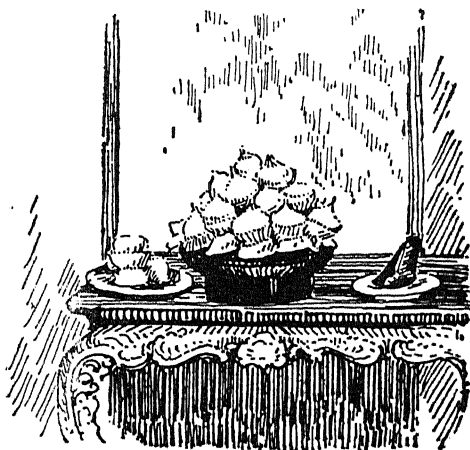
Ping Yung was very reverent and solemn in all that he did, and when he rose, the side frames were lifted to their granite bases, propped into position, and firmly secured. A tremendous fusillade of crackers and a violent beating of gongs warded off evil spirits during the process. The Peak Nest, which, by the way, was a gift from Ping Yung, was then secured to the ridgepole, and the Lucky Grass, Omen of Prosperity, and the Ten Thousand Years Green, tied with long red and green silk streamers, were fastened to its centre. The



A YOUNG CARPENTER STOOD BELOW THE PEAK NEST

pole was hoisted into position by means of ropes and was made fast by beautifully carved wooden pins, at least three feet long. Meanwhile, the gongs and crackers played their parts faithfully.

Then followed the most interesting part of the ceremony. A plank was placed under the ridgepole, and one of the young carpenters climbed up and stood just under the Peak Nest; a trayful of Guarantee Prosperity Dumplings decorated with green, not red, was handed up to him; these he threw to the four quarters of the



THE GUARANTEE PROSPERITY DUMPLINGS

compass, east, west, south, and north, singing as he did so. The dumplings fell among the gaping crowd, who scrambled eagerly for them. Standing below the scarlet and green streamers, silhouetted against an immense white cloud, wearing only a pair of bright blue trousers and a soft neckcloth, his copper body glistening in the sun, he made an extraordinary picture, as he began his song:

I trod on the nest of the Golden Pheasants.

The Golden Pheasants rose up, *p'êng, p'êng*, the sound of their wings.

That they flew to this spot and alighted is great good fortune.

The song ended and the dumplings all distributed, the young carpenter descended and the plank was removed. At this point Amah, who had been prompting me, thrust into my hand little red packets of 'gift money.' These I duly presented to the various foremen, who, changing the silver dollars into copper cash, divided it among their men; the carpenters, the masons, and the wood-carvers. There was also a small present for the 'puttee colour man' who had decorated the ridgepole. The contractor and foremen then bowed repeatedly to the gay picture of Lu Pan. Nothing remained to be done except to 'take leave of the spirit on its departure,' so a pile of silver spirit money was prepared, Lu Pan's effigy was laid reverently upon it, and then the whole was set alight. While the red flames licked up the little heap, Ping Yung and his assistants stood at the four corners bowing vigorously, each man shaking hands with himself as is the Chinese custom. We had ordered five hundred Guarantee Prosperity Dumplings and they had not all been thrown to the four quarters, so the remains were now distributed among the people. The feast was then removed and later consumed by the workmen and our household staff; thus the function ended.

After the ceremony, I walked slowly back to the house with Yo Fei, my Chinese dog of whom more later, and gradually that deep stillness so characteristic of summer noontide in China spread over the fields about us. During the hot months, farmers begin their work with the first pale dawn. By ten o'clock in the morning, they have all taken refuge from the sun and do not reappear until the shadows begin to lengthen.

As we stood on the upper verandah of Wild Goose Happiness House, not a human being was to be seen, but I could look down upon the newly erected ridgepole of the Grass Hut. The gilt Peak Nest shone in the brilliant sunshine and the bunch of fortunate herbs swung back and forth, while the red and green streamers fluttered gaily in the strong wind of the Southwest Monsoon.

### THE LITTLE APPRENTICES

Autumn Stands

We are much interested in all the work-people who are creating my Grass Hut, but Amah, Yo Fei, and I have special feeling for the little apprentices, who seem to be doing the greater part of the building. There are two groups, little masons and little carpenters, and their ages range from about eight to fifteen. Amah tells me that they are paid no wages, but are fed, clothed, and taught their trade. The period of apprenticeship varies with the age of the child, but always lasts three or four years.

The workmen are paid on the first and fifteenth of each Moon, or rather on the evening before these days. Then they all, according to Amah, 'Wash, Wash; makee handsome looksee; puttee handsome clothes; go home.' The little apprentices, on the contrary, have no pay, and consequently remain where they are. Amah says she asked them if they had any money. They did not speak in reply, but slowly and sadly shook their heads. So we decided to give each child, on pay-day, twenty cents in small money, which vast sum would amount to thirty coppers per boy. They could then

buy buried ducks' eggs of exquisite flavor, or some other delicacy, to add piquancy to the boiled rice and cabbage of everyday fare.

Amah stands them in two rows, the smaller ones in front, the larger ones behind; then she and Yo Fei distribute the coppers with care and impartiality, and a group of happy little boys, which I notice grows larger every fortnight, goes off to the neighbouring village to make purchases.

It is wonderful to watch them work. The little carpenters wield axes as long as their arms and the little mason men carry all mortar used in the brick-laying, from the mixing-stands to the walls, by means of two little buckets slung at either end of a shoulder pole. They also help the sculptor who designs and models the plaster figures for roof ornaments.

#### THE MAKERS OF ORNAMENT

In Kiangsu, roofs, although not so elaborate nor so deeply curved as those of the southern provinces, are more profusely decorated than those of North China. I have chosen a very typical model for the Grass Hut. The roof is heavily curved to north and south, and at either end, instead of the gables used in Occidental houses, a parapet rises in graduated tiers, each terminating in the conventionalized head of a Love-Pheasant. From the ridgepole rises a deep band of ornament ending in *ch'ih wei*, the famous 'owl-tail fish.'

When these dragon-headed monsters rise from the depths, it is supposed that immediately their tightly curled tails emerge from the surface of the water, great waves break into foam, and rain descends in torrents.

They are, therefore, looked upon as a protection against fire. The centre roof-ornament is usually filled with figures. In our case Kuo Tzŭ-i, saviour of the T'ang Dynasty, and his wife are shown receiving congratulations on his birthday. Guests, laden with presents, approach from either side along a roadway edged with trees. The smaller details of these groups, the little men and women, chairs, tables, flowers, and so on, are modelled at a work-table on the ground, and are then placed in position; but the large forms, such as the owl-tail fish, are moulded in position from a formless piece of clay.

Our sculptor sits astride the ridgepole with his pet song-bird, its dainty cage, carefully shaded with blue cloth, hanging beside him as he works. He is an artist in his way and has a great deal of temperament. Ping Yung treats him with infinite consideration. The Chinese consider that it is most important to keep in the best of humour all the workmen and apprentices who have any connection with the making of these elaborate scenes, as in popular belief they hold great power in their hands, and may cause disaster to fall on the house if they are displeased.

#### THE FESTIVAL OF LONELY SPIRITS

Seventh Moon, Fifteenth Day

It is the Spirits' Festival, the day when all Lonely Spirits must be cared for. The Spiritual Magistrate of the City Walls and City Moats will make his summer tour of inspection. Ping Yung's stout young brother, who acts as foreman of our works, is connected with the City Temple and plays an important part in the cere-

mony. The workmen departed last night, after an extra 'wash, wash,' and today there are only small boys on the premises. Amah and Yo Fei tipped them this morning and then we inspected the feast laid for our own Lonely Spirits.

The history of these spirits is rather interesting. Years ago when we bought the ground on which Wild Goose Happiness House now stands, a large and important grave mound occupied one corner. To the north stood a very good farmhouse in which the caretakers lived, and which had many extra rooms used by the family at the season of Clear Brightness when tombs must be swept. In the inner courtyard, shaded by an immense cassia tree, was placed the Ancestral Hall, a large gilded cupboard full of spirit tablets dating back for many generations.

In accordance with prescribed custom, when we acquired the place the coffins were removed from the grave mound by the descendants of the dead, who were the vendors of the land. For some unaccountable reason, however, they did not come to fetch the tablets. Weeks became months, but the tablets remained. It was most inconvenient. We intended to convert the farmhouse into servants' quarters, but of course no one would dream of occupying it with a neglected Ancestral Hall standing in the courtyard. Finally, I consulted Canton Carpenter in my predicament. He was terribly shocked at the situation. 'Any man, more bad, no can do'; so he said, gravely shaking his head, and indeed, it was incredible that a family could be brought to such depths of insensibility that they would abandon the sacred tablets in which spirits of their forefathers reposed.



Being very young at the time and utterly inexperienced, I suggested that the decorative Ancestral Hall with its precious contents be placed intact in our vestibule. The look which came over Canton Carpenter's face did more to enlighten the darkness of my ignorance than any torrent of words could have accomplished. For an instant the depths of a Chinese soul were revealed.

'Never can,' was all he said.

'What thing can do?' I asked helplessly; 'can throw away?'

'No can throw 'way,' was the laconic reply.

'Can burn?' I inquired further.

'Burn; can burn. More better no burn.'

I was at my wits' end; we seemed to be saddled with generations of intangible wraiths impossible to dispose of. A feeling of awe crept over me. Finally I timidly inquired if it would be suitable, even possible, to build a little shrine in the garden and place the spirit tablets in that?

'True; b'long number one fashion.' Canton Carpenter's face beamed with relief; so the little shrine was built on a carefully chosen site where 'wind and water' influences were propitious, and from that day to this the members of our household have never failed to offer proper sacrifices at the appointed times, and of course the spirits will move to the Grass Hut with us when the time comes.

Today a special feast was laid on a square table in front of the little house. Fish, eggs, pork, cabbage, chicken, rice, and wine were all prepared in the best dishes and bowls we possess, the sweet odour of sandal-

wood curled from the sticks in the blue-and-white incense-burner, and red candles made a pale flickering in the brilliant noonday sun. The servants came one by one and, kneeling on a straw mat, bowed, repeatedly and reverently, knocking their foreheads on the ground. A generous heap of glittering spirit money was prepared in readiness to be forwarded, by the efficacious medium of fire, to the World of Shade, there to be used by our own Lonely Spirits.

When the ceremony was completed, the food was removed and eaten by the household. This is in accordance with laws laid down in the Book of Rites, wherein it is expressly commanded that sacrificial offerings shall be reverently consumed by those who present the sacrifice.

#### THE FESTIVAL OF TI TSANG

Seventh Moon, Twenty-Ninth Day

The Seventh Moon may be called the Carnival of Spirits. They are supposed to pass between the two worlds with more freedom than at any time of the year. However, with the darkness which attends the waning moon, their sway is ended. On the twenty-ninth day of the Moon, when it shows no light, the festival of the Earth Spirit, Ti Tsang Wang, falls. He has been called 'the compassionate Ti Tsang, whose gracious function it is to fling open the gates and lighten the gloom of hell and rescue tortured souls from the pitiless King of Devils.'

On the last day of the seventh month, Ti Tsang should see that the spirits from the World of Shade are safely locked away from the World of Light until the seventh

month of the following year, and in order that he may perform this duty thoroughly, the people honour and propitiate him with a charming but very simple ceremony. In the popular belief, Ti Tsang's eyes are closed except on this day, when he opens them in order that he may find any stray wraiths from the World of Ghosts. With the purpose of making this world beautiful and acceptable in his sight, little bundles of burning incense-sticks are placed in a long line, punctuated with flaming candles, in front of each house. It is the business of the children to plant these barricades in the earth as soon as dusk falls — why the children, I do not know.

Amah says: 'This b'long baby pidgin, large man do, no handsome.'

At all events, I shall never forget watching the little apprentices with incense-sticks and candles all lighted, as they made the barricade of fire in front of my Grass Hut in the soft still darkness of a summer's night. Ceremonies as a rule are attended with so much noise, so many crackers, so many gongs and clashing cymbals, that this quiet intimate proceeding made an indelible impression on my mind.

I left the little boys softly crooning to themselves as they watched the blazing candles and smouldering incense-sticks. The dark sky, spangled with stars, stretched over a dark earth, equally spangled with dotted lights from millions of incense-sticks. Thin smoke rose from before ten thousand doorways, and the whole air was sweet with perfume.

## THE MOON FESTIVAL

Eighth Moon, Fifteenth Day

The Mid-Autumn, Harvest, or Moon Festival, is one of the four important celebrations of the year. Not a workman is to be seen. Every single one has gone to his home, because on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, when the moon attains its greatest brilliance, when its perfect circle is a symbol of unity, it is considered most important that husband and wife be together. It is supposed to be the women's gala day, but men take an active part in the festivities, which reach their height in the evening.

The ceremonies vary in different parts of the country, but have certain features in common. For instance, everybody eats moon cakes, most delicious round, sweet dumplings made of flour, mixed with nuts and fruits; and the feast spread by the women all over China in honour of the moon is always composed of symbolic fruits and seeds. Many different kinds are used and for various reasons, but these reasons are all connected with matrimony and posterity. Watermelons are present because they have quantities of seed, which always suggest sons; because they are green, the colour of youth; and because they are round; that is, they make a perfect whole as husband and wife should do. A root stock of lotus, the colour of white jade, is also offered, and, as its fibres hold with remarkable tenacity, it is looked upon as an emblem of constancy.

Water chestnuts are always a part of the feast. Their colour suggests happiness; their aquatic habit of growth, a cleansing from all evil; and their shape, a well-balanced

pair. The purple water plant, *Euryale ferox*, appears because it provides seeds which are made into coarse cakes sometimes used in childbirth, and as these seeds are very numerous, they are a symbol of posterity and unity of the clan. The taro and other edible tubers, the pear, and the chestnut, which are often present, all express a desire for descendants, though in different ways. Moon cakes are there. Sometimes thirteen are used, of different sizes, piled high in a pyramid; they suggest a circle of happiness for each month in the year. Branches of the cassia tree make a popular decoration universally employed. The tree is then in full bloom, and the delicious scent from its tiny yellow flowers pervades every corner of the house.

The most perfect specimen of this tree is supposed to grow in the moon, and anyone who can snap a twig is sure to secure high literary honours. An eighth-century legend relates that a certain Wu Kang, a sorcerer, committed some fault against the higher powers and was condemned to fell this marvellous tree which is fifteen hundred feet in height. He is perpetually engaged upon his hopeless task, as each blow of his axe only makes an incision which instantly closes when the tool is removed.

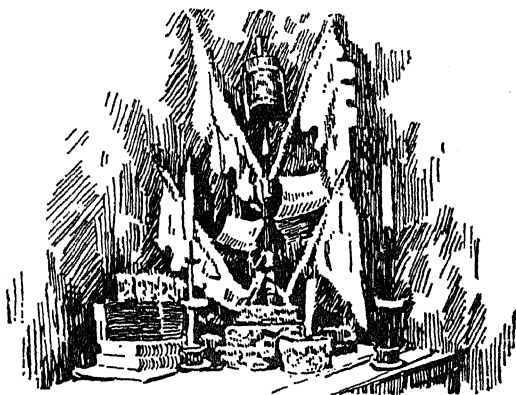
A three-legged toad is also found in the moon. It was once a lovely lady named Ch'ang O, wife of the famous archer, Hou I, who was powerful enough to shoot and destroy a monster bent on devouring the orb of night. He was a favourite of the Western Empress Mother who holds court in the mountains of Central Asia, and she sent him, as a mark of her favour, a plant of immortality. Ch'ang O stole the plant and fled with it to the moon, where she was turned into the three-legged toad.

A rabbit is another of the legendary inhabitants of the moon, and passes a useful existence pounding drugs of immortality in an immense mortar. In the North, at this season, charming little clay figures of the rabbit are sold in the streets, but I have not seen them in the Yangtze Valley.

A very important member of the lunar population is the Old Man who presides over all marriages that take place on earth.

#### THE NORTHERN MEASURE

Worship of the Northern Measure, as the Chinese call our constellation of the Great Bear, also takes place



A GAY PAPER MOON PALACE

at the Mid-Autumn Festival. In Kiangsu every household has a beautiful 'rice-measure,' even though it be but a little one. They are made in an infinite variety of sizes, are filled with large pieces of sandalwood, and embellished with a gay paper moon palace which rises from the centre around a pillar of incense-sticks. Early in the

morning the tip of this pillar is lighted, and throughout the day it smoulders slowly; by midnight the whole erection is consumed.

A figure of the Patron Saint of Literature is placed in the palace because he is supposed to inhabit one of the stars in the Northern Measure. Many and varying legends are told of his origin. According to one, he was a brilliant scholar who was unfortunately terribly disfigured. It was customary for the Emperor to give with his own hand a rose of gold to the student who won the highest place in the triennial examinations. This feat was accomplished by the scholar in question, but the Son of Heaven was so terrified by his hideous countenance that he withheld the rose, and the unfortunate man walked straight from the Imperial audience hall and threw himself into a river. He did not drown, however, as a sea monster, who happened to be swimming about, brought him to the surface and saved his life. He then ascended to heaven and assumed control of the Literature on earth. He is shown in a conventional form, holding a writing-brush in his right hand and a square measure in his left; one of his legs is raised in the air and he has the head of a demon. He is generally spoken of as the Star of Literature. His figure is naturally very popular among men of letters, who are apt to keep either a little statue or a painted portrait in their private study-rooms.

#### THE MOON DANCE

Although the Grass Hut is deserted, our dipper and moon palace burned all day, filling the air with their fragrance.

In ancient China a famous *ko wu* (song posturing-

dance) was performed at the Moon Festival, sometimes by one girl, sometimes by two. In the latter case it was called a 'great posturing-dance,' and one girl sang the song while the other postured. If only one girl took part, it was called a 'lesser posturing-dance.' Japan and Korea took the *ko wu* from China and I believe it can still be seen in those countries. The words are grouped in six phrases:

Eighth Moon, fifteenth day, take pleasure in moon's light.  
 Hands hold moon cakes; from eyes, tears stream.  
 Recollections spring to mind; extremely bitter is heart.  
 Last year, with my Lord; united we rejoiced in the moon.  
 This year, without my Lord; alone endure solitude.  
 Tears serve to wash and lave, upper garments, lower  
 garments.

The song is supposed to illustrate a saying that when the moon reaches mid-autumn, it has more than its usual share of brilliance; it is as if polished; it is absolutely spotless; nothing dims its splendour; it is therefore symbolical of a perfectly happy marriage.

The performer wore a long robe with sleeves that swept the ground, and carried attached to the little finger of her left hand a square of silk fringed on each of the four sides. She accompanied the song by an elaborate pantomime, and after each phrase the air was prolonged indefinitely.

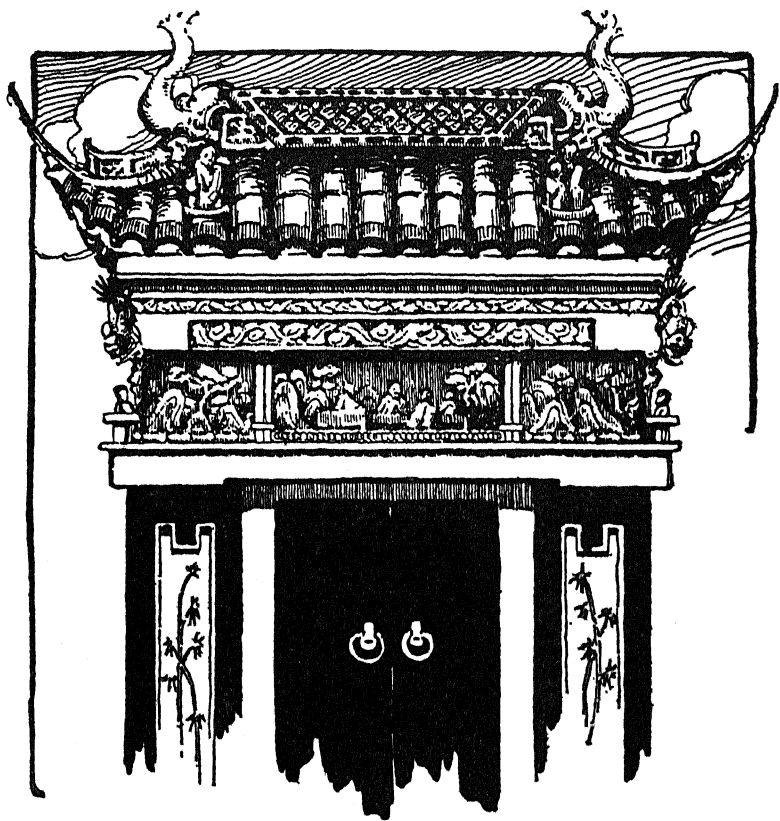
The Harvest Festival ceremonies continue, as a rule, until dawn, and I think a very tired set of workmen will reach the Grass Hut when tomorrow comes.



## THE HOUSE NEARS COMPLETION

Hoar Frost Descends

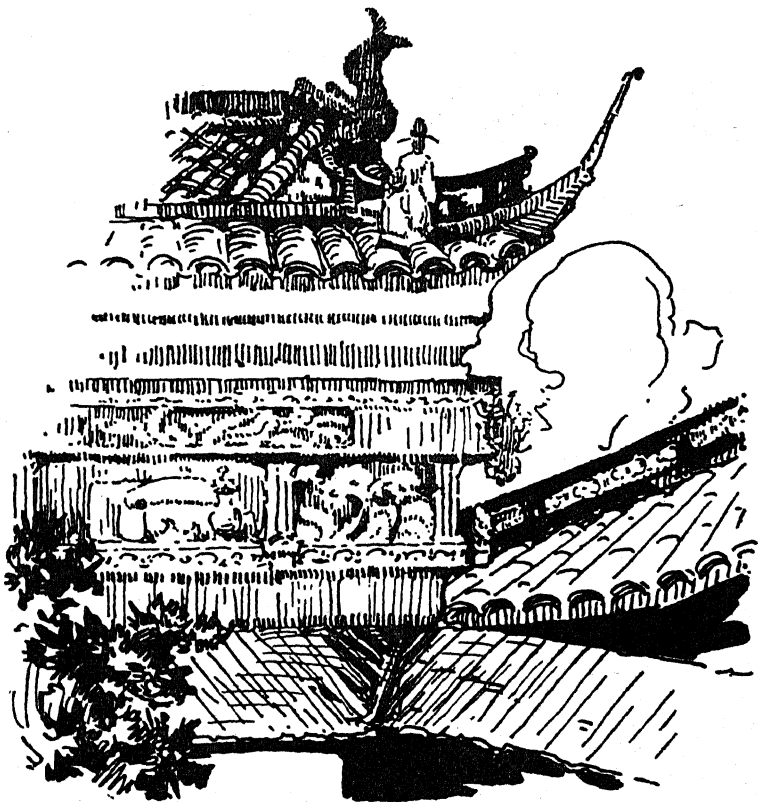
The masons have gone, the masonry is finished, walls are filled in, the roof is tiled, ornaments are in place; and only carpenters remain to finish the interior.



THE GREAT GATE OF THE GRASS HUT

The Great Gate has really turned out beautifully, and passers-by stand in groups gaping at the figures which decorate roof and sides. The space over the twin planks

of black wood, which form the door itself, is divided into three panels. The central one shows the poets, Li T'ai-po and Tu Fu, seated on a mountain-side playing *wei ch'i*, or hedged-in checkers, while serving-boys fan a



THE INNER SIDE OF THE GREAT GATE

charcoal brazier on which wine is being warmed. The side panels are filled with typical Chinese landscapes. Little hills rise abruptly from among groups of blossoming plum trees, and pines cast a grateful shade. A

straight narrow band above the panels is filled with peonies, emblems of prosperity and wealth. This whole scheme of decoration is repeated on the inner side of the Great Gate, the only variation being in the central panel, which is there filled with a charming group composed of books, pictures, musical instruments, flowers, and so on, illustrating the Seven Fine Arts of writing, painting, playing hedged-in checkers, playing the table-lute, composing poems, drinking wine, and cultivating flowers. The roof is surmounted by owl-tail fish and the figures of various historical personages. On wide supporting pillars, at either side of the doorway, are long narrow panels filled with bamboos.

Now that the workmen are collected inside the house, we have been able to work in the courtyards. Although they are tiny, by judicious planning the essential elements of Chinese gardens can be assembled. Evil influences must be guarded against, and as these influences find it very difficult, nay, impossible, to turn a corner, all one need do is to place a screen, either just in front, or just behind, the Great Gate. As the Municipal Council would never issue a permit for the erection of a spirit screen in the centre of a public road, ours is placed inside the court.

I have been fortunate in finding beautiful water-worn rocks of fantastic shapes and these are piled into hills of stone as the Chinese express the process of arrangement. An old man was engaged who makes a specialty of this piling. He considered the position carefully from every point of view and then directed the workmen. As he is quite old, he brought an aid, who stood a little behind him and passed on his orders,



THE SPIRIT SCREEN INSIDE THE GREAT GATE

while he himself puffed his tiny pipe and thought deeply. Neither of them dreamed of so much as touching a stone; they only planned and advised.

The east wall of the principal court is necessarily rounded, as it stands on the sweep of a municipal cross-road, so it has been topped by a coiling dragon. The sinuous curves of his body are supposed to suggest hills, his tail brushes the Great Gate and his noble head protects the house.

In the bend of the wall we have built a mountain, surmounted by a fine fir tree, and covered with azaleas and other flowering shrubs. A tiny path leads to the summit, where stands a rough rock shrine dedicated to the Spirit of the Hills. In such a shrine a figure would be out of place, so Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos wrote the one word 'spirit' on a curious stone and put it in the little temple. I have used several stumps and picturesque old tree-trunks to give the place an air of antiquity, and as I was dragging one of these into place, I overheard a workman say to his comrade, '*Ai-ya*' (it is a dragon!')

Plum trees, pines and bamboos, the 'three friends who do not fear winter cold,' are grouped about the spirit screen; a waterfall dashes over its rocks and falls into a tiny fish-pool; the trunk of a fossil tree forms a high peak by its side; and clustering plants of Ten Thousand Years Green make a thick carpet at its foot. Pieces of broken tile, yellow, green, mauve, and turquoise blue, represent the site of an ancient palace in the wilds. I picked up these bits one day when strolling in that sad, deserted pleasure-ground, the Yüan Ming Yüan, or Round Bright Garden, near Peking. It was

the summer palace of the Manchu rulers and must have been really beautiful.

West of the spirit screen, between it and the pebble path, there remained an empty space, and one morning Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos said:

‘What does Love-Poetry-Mother intend to place here?’

‘I don’t know,’ I replied; ‘what would you advise?’

‘A pine tree,’ was the prompt response.

‘A pine tree?’ I queried; ‘would it not be too large? However, if you think it right, we will find one.’

So we searched the old garden for a tree, and at last I discovered a fine specimen which seemed quite suitable, but I shall never forget the look which crossed the teacher’s face when I pointed it out. A look in which pity and tolerant patience were mingled.

He spoke quietly and soothingly as to a child: ‘I do not mean a tree like that, Love-Poetry-Mother, not a fine tree like a beautiful young girl. How would such a tree look beside the stumps of your forest, and near the broken tiles of your old palace? No, I mean an old tree, a crooked one, a tree like a Buddhist priest or a Taoist.’

With some difficulty we found one to his liking. It was very gnarled and sparse, but he spent a whole morning directing the small gardener, who clipped it drastically to make it look still more like an ancient greybeard.

The whimsical imagination of a Chinese is very difficult for an American to understand!

## PLANTS AND ORNAMENTS

An unusual plant now growing in the courtyard was given me long ago by a lonely, miserable old tailor who sewed in the back quarters for years. He was one of those people whose natural sadness is so profound that no efforts on the part of those about them bring com-



A STONE LION OR DOG OF FO

fort. We never knew what became of him, but once, when on a short visit to his home, he vanished, and my household firmly believe that he committed suicide. The plant he gave me is known as 'Book Girdle Grass' and has tiny little tuberous roots of a most delicious scent which are said to be a remedy for hæmorrhage.

It spreads widely, making a veritable mat of herbage. A noted scholar, Cheng Hsüan, who lived about A.D. 200, is supposed to have grown it in the courtyard of his study. He was a very learned person and insisted upon educating even the slave girls of his household. It is said that they were expected to write poems, and if they failed to do so, were obliged to kneel upon the Book Girdle Grass growing at their master's door until inspiration came.

The guardians of the courtyard are two stone lions, or Dogs of Fo. The male is placed to the east, and the female to the west; and while the lady dutifully cares for the baby held in her arms, the gentleman plays with a ball!

Lions are not native to China, so the Chinese are never quite sure of their appearance, and these fabulous creatures do not look in the least like lions of Africa.

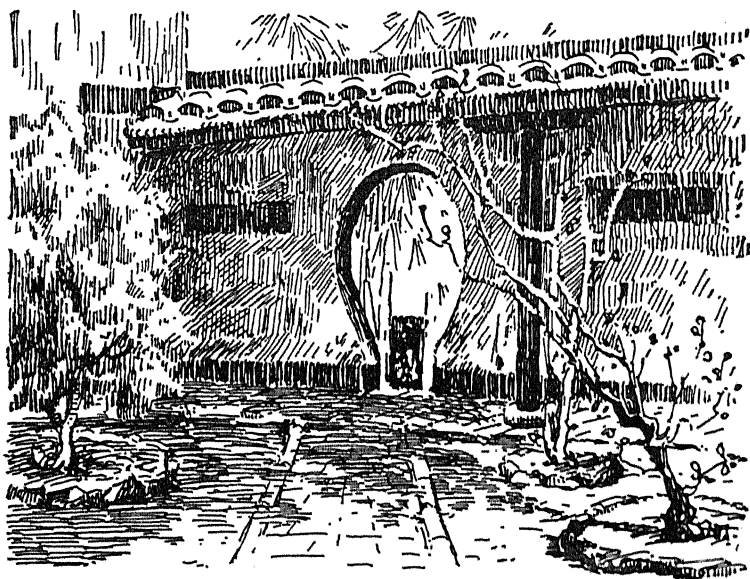
They are in fact connected with the Buddhist religion, and it is said that the pet dog of a Buddhist saint, after accompanying his master in his earthly career, was transformed into a mighty lion capable of carrying the saint through the heavenly regions beyond the fire-coloured clouds of Paradise.

#### THE OVAL DOORWAYS

An oval door leads from my principal courtyard into a bamboo grove, where our spirit-tablet house has found its resting-place. I intended the door to be completely round, a moon door in fact, but there was a misunderstanding on this point and now I am obliged to content myself with an oval. Perhaps it is as well. Heaven does not tolerate perfection. The Chinese say



that should a house contain anything absolutely complete, such as a whole set of the almanac for a cycle of



THE OVAL DOORWAY OF THE SECOND COURTYARD

sixty years, with not a volume missing, or an entire set of ancient coins without a single gap, then that house will surely be destroyed by the Will of Heaven.

The bamboo grove is perfectly wild; it is as if one stepped out to the mountain-side, peopled only by spirits of the dead. Besides the spirit-tablet house, there is a stone slab erected to the Earth Empress, and also a pair of stone rams which came from before the tomb of some Ming dignitary. Two mounds of earth, covered with grass and wild flowers, represent the graves one would naturally find in such a place.

Another oval door — which I had also meant to have

round — leads into a second courtyard on which the bedrooms open. Here are planted many flowering shrubs and several fine trees. An old weeping ash stands in one corner, and a cassia in another.

One of the prettiest and most characteristic features of a Kiangsu cottage is the treatment of the northern roof slope. The central portion is kept shorter than the rest; that is, it stops four or five feet short of the outer wall. An inner partition is put up to enclose the room abutting on this space, which is kept uncovered, thus forming a small Heaven's Well. Trees are planted in it. A group of heavenly bamboos is so arranged that it can



THE HEAVEN'S WELL

be seen from the Guest-Hall, while specimens of the *magnolia conspicua* tower above, thrusting their crowns through the aperture, and bursting their white jade blooms against the dark grey tile roof.

The Chinese consider that in some appropriate place it is important to keep a plain white wall ready to be decorated by one's friends. An artist can then dash off a landscape, or a verse-writer can write a poem. My plain white wall is set with slate slabs engraved with writings by Yo Fei. There are two. One is a facsimile of his calligraphy, and the words he wrote are:

Letters are the glory of the State;

The Odes and Book of Rites circulate in every household.

The other is a transcript, by Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, of the poem Yo Fei uttered when in despair at the opposition he met with from the Court. It is chanted to the air: 'An Overflowing River Red with Blood.'

#### THE KITCHEN COURTYARD

The third courtyard is used by the household staff, who plant what flowers they wish around the beautiful *paulownia* tree which opens its purple blooms in the very centre. Number One Boy's room, and Amah's, the staff dining-room, and both kitchens are grouped on the four sides.

I always think that the Chinese cook-room is one of the most interesting corners of the house. A Chinese stove is, in itself, very picturesque. Built of plastered brick, it is gaily decorated with flowers, landscapes, or historical scenes, painted in free-hand on its white surface. Huge iron pans, sunk into the top, are used for boiling rice, the front is solid and the fire is tended from behind. Halfway up the chimney-breast, so arranged as to face south, is the little niche where sits a portrait of Ts'ao Chün, Lord of the Stove.

The use of Ts'ao Chün's picture is universal. I do not suppose that it is lacking from a single kitchen in China; but in our fourth courtyard there is installed in a little temple an Empress of Heaven, and this is most unusual.

The way it all happened is this: Once, upon my return from America, I found that Amah, who is very fond of pilgrimages and temple ceremonies, had been presented with a little figure of the Empress of Heaven. The priest who gave it to her said that it had been miraculously saved from shipwreck, and that its spiritual qualities were most efficacious. At all events, I found that the servants' hall, made and furnished with thoughtful care, had been converted into a temple for her use. I was rather nonplussed. In the first place, it seemed a pity that the whole staff should be deprived of their sitting-room — not that they minded, as comfort in our idea of the word really does not exist in the Chinese conception; and in the second place, crowds of people from all the countryside began to make our house a place of pilgrimage. I could not feel that an Empress of Heaven in our midst was entirely desirable.

However, she stayed, and as time went on, I often met women with trouble in their eyes coming toward the house. They carried spirit-money and bundles of incense and came to beg intervention for a sick child, a parent, or a husband. The little temple which had been very bare became more furnished. Thank-offerings beautified its walls, and I heard of numerous cures attributed to the power of the little lady who sat, clothed in green silk, behind the curtains of a Heaven Palace. The wife of a municipal detective in the near-by police station, whose little son recovered after she had acted

on the advice of Heaven's Empress, gave a lovely yellow hanging, beautifully embroidered with black characters.

One evening, Amah appeared in my room rather overcome, and told me the following story: It seems that an old woman had arrived from the Chinese city which lay quite five miles from our house. No one in the house had ever seen her before, but of course the staff received her politely and listened with great interest to her tale. She said that she had had a dream; that in the dream, Heaven's Empress had come before her and said: 'To the northwest, in the house of foreign people, I have a shrine; it is very nice and I am well pleased. There is, however, one thing lacking. I am entitled by rank to wear a rose-lined yellow satin coat, and the only one I have is green.'

The old woman asked the Empress what size the coat should be, and received an answer before she woke. The next morning she promptly bought the yellow satin and the rose, and made the coat. When it was finished, she set off in a northwesterly direction, to find the shrine. By dusk she reached a rice shop not far away and in answer to her inquiries was directed to our house. Amah stopped when she reached this point and looked at me quietly for an appreciable time, and then said, 'That coat no b'long too much large; no b'long too much small; b'long all plover. Mississee think so how fashion?' I had no reply for her question. From that day to this the Empress of Heaven has worn a perfectly fitting yellow satin coat with a rose lining.

## INSIDE THE HOUSE

The Grass Hut, inside, has many touches of a cosy American home. Certain things, such as central heating, electric light, running water, and other conveniences, are not usually found in a Kiangsu cottage. Neither are wooden floors, deep armchairs, and soft sofas. This matter of physical comfort in connection with the Chinese is always of great interest to me. The most expensively appointed house is, to our ideas, miserably cold and uncomfortable, and the houses of the poor are very squalid indeed.

How much effect do the written words in universal use actually have upon men's minds? Over the doorway of a wretched group of buildings one may read, 'Hamlet of Ten Thousand Joys,' and though not one of these ten thousand joys may be apparent to the eye, though the inhabitants may be utterly incapable of reading the characters themselves, I cannot help feeling that on those who live there these written words have influence. At any rate, the Chinese consider them vastly important, and a house lacking *tui tzũ*, or 'parallel sentences,' is looked upon as hopelessly uninteresting.

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos has written the *tui tzũ* for our house, and each pair is supposed to fit the position for which it is composed. At the Great Gate the characters read:

High and noble are like a swarm of ants,  
In the moonlight and soft breezes, they enjoy music and wine.

The first court is honoured with two pairs of sentences:  
The sun moves. Bamboo shadows encroach upon the chess-board.  
The wind blows. Fir-flowers fall on the robe of a guest.

And:

In the sun-warmed water fish leap incessantly.

In the quiet courtyard wild birds come of their own free will.

The characters are carved on narrow panels of wood so they can be treated like pictures. Hanging on the wall of my study we read:

Because of the moon I break the paper window.

There is no wind — pine trees alone murmur.

In the second court the legend is:

Because we gaze at flowers, the wine is warmed.

Poems when finished are written on the bark of trees.

And in my bedroom, peace is suggested by the following lines:

The moon is high; flowers are bathed in dew.

By the window it is cool; from the bamboos a little wind springs.

Windows are often made of paper, especially in the dry Northern climate, but in Kiangsu and the South, pearl shell is popular. It is certainly more durable and far more beautiful. The bright linings of mussel shells are cleverly joined and fastened into bamboo borders which fit into the latticed window-frames just as glass panes do. Light, as it passes through this semi-opaque substance, acquires an exquisite quality denied to more transparent matter.

A modern and convenient device which we have adopted in our Grass Hut is to insert a little square of glass at the height of a person's eyes, in order to make the outside world visible. Both Chinese and Japanese



THE MOON FIREPLACE IN THE LIVING-ROOM

are masters in the art of breaking up light, and the designs of woodwork tracery are always beautiful. So are the motives applied above the beams to the white walls of the Guest-Hall. There are no ceilings in the house,



so all the framework is visible and the height gives an impression of size and airiness.

It is difficult to preserve a completely Chinese interior when one must introduce that Occidental comfort of which I have already spoken. Fireplaces, for instance, are entirely unknown in a Kiangsu cottage. I have tried to mitigate the delightful evil by framing ours in a flat round circle.

Lights have been cleverly concealed in old Chinese fittings. There are beautiful candelabra, and black iron baskets formerly used to hold both flowers and candles. Bright silk tassels, yellow, green, purple, and scarlet, hang from all light fixtures and the colours blend most effectively.

Over the moon fireplace on the preposterously high chimney-breast hangs a picture of Love-Pheasants; it is an ink rubbing from far up the Great River, and is hung in the conventional Chinese manner; that is, in a frame of narrow dark wood with brass hangers. The weight of the picture is carried by brass-headed spikes which are driven into the wall beneath it.

Ink rubbings are a specialty among the Chinese and are immensely popular. They form a convenient method of preserving historical and artistic records, and no city lacks shops devoted to their sale.

The art of obtaining a rubbing from some ancient bronze or prehistoric stone provides a livelihood for many sons of Han. A sheet of thin tough paper is stretched over the carving to be treated, and is moistened with a paste made from sea-water algæ. It is then protected by coarser paper and skilfully tapped into all interstices of the carving by means of a stiff two-ended

brush. The ink itself is applied to the thin paper, with a pad of wool tied in a smooth silk cover. When dry, the rubbing shows in black and white, a perfect replica of the inscription or carving thus dealt with.

Nor are rubbings taken only from ancient relics. My Love-Pheasants, for instance, were carved on stone from a painting by a certain Pao, an official under the Manchu Dynasty who came from K'uei Chou-fu, a city at the head of the Three Chasms. He and his sons were travelling up the Great River on a visit to their home, when they were wrecked in the terrible rapid of Kung Ling T'an. Only Pao survived. His sons and all his suite were sucked down into the copper-coloured flood of the mighty stream. Pao himself, broken-hearted, resigned his post, and retired to K'uei Chou-fu for the rest of his life, devoting himself to the pursuit of literature and art.

A few Chinese chairs and tables, of the models from which Chippendale and Hepplewhite drew their inspiration, give character to the Guest-Hall, as do a pair of black-and-gold lacquer book cupboards. They are very beautiful, these relics of the Ming Dynasty. The artist has obtained an extraordinary effect of distance in the landscapes on their doors by the clever use of gold and silver lacquer. Near-by hills are bright and ruddy, far-off peaks pale and grey.

Bright pebbles from the Rain-Flowers Hill near Nanking are arranged in a bowl of water. The Chinese call them Eye-Refreshing Stones, as they are supposed to rest the weary eyes of scholars. These are purely Chinese and so is the bamboo writing-brush holder, another of my treasures. It is a section of a bamboo

trunk, at least five inches in diameter and is finely carved with incised lines. One side shows an exquisite little country scene and the other bears the following poem:

Riding a horse in the autumn wind, in Imprisoned Tiger  
District,  
I followed a stony path which turned and twisted in the red  
light of evening.  
I still remember the place where white clouds made a ring,  
and encircled  
The sharp peaks and rounded hills of ten thousand ranges.

#### MOVING INTO THE GRASS HUT

Great Snow

Gay touches of colour are provided by the scarlet silk and gold lettering of the hanging scrolls presented by the staff when we moved to the Grass Hut during the period of Great Snow. Auspicious sentences, such as, 'May the prosperity of the eminent Hall rise to the clouds,' run down the centre, and in the lower left-hand corner the donors' names are grouped; all cut from gilt paper. They gave us flower candles too; beautiful fat red candles, decorated with exquisite openwork pictures which looked as if fairies from the Western Paradise had cut them out with magic scissors. The flowers, birds, and lovely ladies were fine as lace and far too beautiful to burn.

Number Two Boy lent his handsome ancestral pewter altar set — candlesticks, incense-burner, and flower vases — as a temporary ornament which added greatly to the appearance of our Guest-Hall. He comes of a family greatly distinguished in official life for many centuries, and showed me, the other day, a portrait of

an ancestor who served as Prime Minister during the Sung Dynasty, A.D. 960-1127. He himself is a nervous, high-strung creature who began life as a teacher of the old school, but who is now glad to support his ever-growing family by humouring with unfailing patience my whims. Members of the household all call him Teacher and admire greatly his skill with a writing-brush.

The moving-in festivities were crowned by a delicious feast prepared in the Chrysanthemum-Flower Cauldron and served on the Imperial dinner service I was fortunate enough to purchase in Nine Rivers. Until the Revolution, this beautiful yellow porcelain, with its design of five colours and its motto, 'Ten Thousand Years of Longevity without Ending,' was only used in palaces of the Son of Heaven; but since 1911 it has been possible to buy stray pieces in various shops and thus compose a complete set.

And so the Grass Hut was finished.



## CHAPTER III

### PICTURES OF MY FRIENDS

On the bright morrow, mountain peaks divide us,  
We shall be immersed in endless, endless, world affairs.

TU FU: *The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*



## CHAPTER III

### *Pictures of My Friends*

YES, my Grass Hut by the Yellow Reach to this very day stands as a tangible sign of how deeply all that I had been learning had entered into my own life. Even the work that I had found for myself came of this interest and these studies of mine. For long before the masons and the carpenters and the little apprentices came to create the Grass Hut, I had become absorbed in my work of translation.

Every morning, as the clock struck nine, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos and I would sit down together at my long study table, Chinese books and dictionaries piled up in front of us, and our day's work would begin. How grave, silent unless moved to expression, how sympathetic, interested, and patient he was! Oh, how patient! Without his help, I could scarcely have written a line. Yet with him, how the translation did grow, step by step!

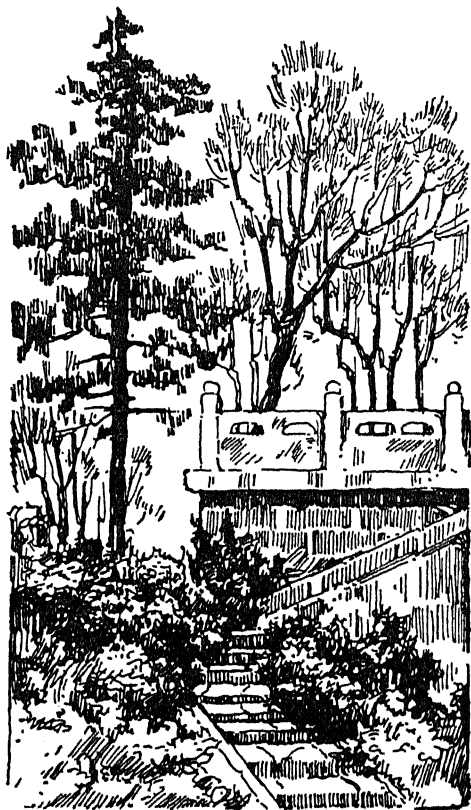
But it grew slowly, even so. We would be bending over a Chinese poem, in which the poet described a scene or alluded to a custom which was entirely strange to me, a Westerner. Then Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos must explain — and in so doing he gave history and legend in ample measure.

'But,' he would exclaim, perplexed at my ignorance, 'does not Ai Shih Mu know that?'

Ai Shih Mu, or Love-Poetry-Mother, the name he called me by, would then shake her head, realizing



acutely the depths of her limitations, and then would listen attentively while that ignorance was enlightened.



What stories he told me! What vistas he opened up before me — far, far more than I have yet been able to include in my writings. He was especially interested in the women of his country, and some day I should like, with his help, to write a book about Chinese women, for although, until lately, they have lived secluded lives,

they have had an immense influence on the development of their country.

Nor was Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos the only one of those I saw day after day who contributed to my understanding of things Chinese and gave me much for my own work of translation and writing. With these others, however, it was necessary for me to use pidgin English.

The reason for this goes back to ancient Chinese belief and history, just as so much else does. According to ancient Chinese belief, the world was a square bounded by four great seas. All within this vast enclosure they considered as having sprung from the same source and as being under the same ruler, the Son of Heaven, as they called their Emperor. Naturally, when foreigners came to China, they could not fall into this system. Americans objected to having their President regarded as being under the Emperor of China, nor would the English agree that their King held a subordinate position.

This was one of the things which complicated the relations between the Chinese and foreigners, and created an additional barrier to the learning of the Chinese language. Another was the difficulty of the language itself and the fact that in different parts of China entirely different languages are spoken. Those Europeans who did decide to learn Chinese determined quite rightly to master the Mandarin or official tongue, which is by far the most generally spoken, but which is not understood by the dwellers of Shanghai. When I began to learn Chinese, I decided to do the same. And I was therefore obliged to speak with the people of

Shanghai in pidgin English, a language which I have always found most expressive.

#### MEMBERS OF OUR STAFF

In this way, I came to know intimately our native staff. I became fast friends with Amah, whom you have already met, as well as with Number One Boy. The latter did not join us until we had tried several other people in his post. And his coming was engineered by Amah, as he was her 'cousin-brother,' a relationship to which she constantly referred, but which she never explained! He was very silent, not so amusing as Amah, but he was amazingly efficient, and life without his quiet assistance would have been far more complicated for the East-Household Lady than it was.

He proved his resourcefulness one day in 1927, when the allied forces were stationed in Shanghai to keep the belligerent Chinese armies out of the International Settlement. Thinking that it might be of interest to the men to see pictures of the country they were in, I arranged with the officers that every Monday I should entertain at tea fifty private soldiers.

Upon the first occasion I noticed that rather a strange expression crossed the Boy's face when I told him to prepare a great deal of tea and cakes because 'fifty piece soldier-man wantchee come,' but I did not think much about it.

The day arrived. I surveyed the table — there certainly seemed plenty of food for an army, let alone a band of fifty. Besides the food, five hundred cigarettes were provided; ten a man I thought sufficient to last a couple of hours. I had not, however, reckoned with the

appetite of an energetic British Tommy. The food melted like snow in May. The Boy looked paler and paler, more and more agitated; presently he came to me and said in a hoarse whisper: 'Cigarettes finish.'

'Maskee' (never mind), I replied, 'have pay plenty.'

'Must wantchee more,' insisted the Boy, and hurrying away produced those specially imported by my husband, which he quickly handed round.

When the party was over and Amah was brushing my hair, she said with a deep sigh: 'Boy just now very happy; Boy today too much fear.'

'*Fear!*' said I, 'what for fear?'

And then I discovered that the Boy had been terrified throughout the afternoon because he had thought that, when the cigarettes and food gave out, the soldiers would break up everything in the house. He could not conceive of men under arms so well educated and so disciplined that they would behave as ordinary beings. Chinese soldiers probably would have wrecked the house.

Having escaped once, however, he was determined to run no more risks, and before the next party he had thought out a plan. Fifty plates were to be prepared, each of which was to hold a good portion of food — little cakes and extras could be put on the dining-table — and each man was to have his plate handed to him. The cigarettes, moreover, were to be tied in packets of ten to be handed round by myself.

Number One Boy was considered exceedingly handsome by the Chinese. Personally I admired more the looks of Achay, the downstairs coolie, and one day expressed this admiration to Amah. She scornfully

replied, 'Oh, no! Achay too much long.' She meant he was too tall.

'Oh,' said I, 'then whom do you think handsome?'

'Number One Boy,' she said decidedly. 'He b'long proper large.'

Achay was the father of two enchanting little boys, named respectively, 'Hall of Longevity,' and 'Hall of Happiness.' It was very interesting to watch them being taught the rites, such as presenting offerings to the dead, and laying the farewell feast for the Patron Saint of the Kitchen Stove. This is laid five days before the New Year begins.

The Patron Saint of the Kitchen Stove is supposed to keep watch over everybody in the household, and once a year he is expected to make a report to the Jade Emperor on High. Before the journey, a feast is laid before his picture, which lives in a roofed niche above the kitchen stove. His lips are smeared with honey or treacle in order that his report to the Jade Emperor may be sweet, and when evening comes the picture is placed in a green official chair made of paper, and the whole thing is burned.

Before dawn on New Year's Day, a new picture is installed and the Patron Saint of the Kitchen Stove is supposed to have returned from his journey ready to undertake once more the surveillance of the household. During the period of his absence, of course, one can do anything one wishes without danger that the Jade Emperor on High might get wind of the affair.

Little Hall of Longevity and little Hall of Happiness stood solemnly in their padded winter garments beside the kitchen stove waiting for the exciting moment when

the Patron Saint must start on his journey to the Jade Emperor. As the fire curled round the green official chair, they folded their little hands, raised them in the gesture of obeisance, and bowed their padded little persons as low as possible. They made an unforgettable picture in the flickering firelight, which also lighted up the flower-painted kitchen stove.

The Feast of Lanterns provided another thrill for little Hall of Longevity and Hall of Happiness. This feast is held on the night of the first full moon of the year, when people go about the streets displaying lanterns of the most varied and fantastic shapes. The Rabbit Who Lives in the Moon is one of the most popular. Mounted on wheels and lighted from within, rabbits of all sizes, white and pink, are drawn along the roads. Lotus blossoms, crabs and birds, wave above the people's heads. It is one of the most charming feasts in the year.

Little Hall of Happiness had a rabbit almost as big as himself, while little Hall of Longevity contented himself with a lotus blossom and a crab. Number One Boy, who always entered with as much zest into any entertainment as I did myself, asked if I wouldn't like the children to make a procession before my dinner guests. So the lights were turned down, and, aided by the small cook and the Number Two Gardener, the little boys, their solemn round faces illuminated by the coloured lanterns, marched in and out of the room, like an army on the stage, swelling their numbers by frequent reappearances.

## THE COMPRADORE

Among my Chinese friends who gave me an insight into their minds, my husband's compradore proved to be a real treasure to me. He was a stout old gentleman who wore silks and satins of the most beautiful colours, and who had a passion for Chinese paintings. I saw him frequently, since it was his duty to negotiate my husband's business with the Chinese. And once or twice a year he used to show me his pictures, a collection very famous in Shanghai, and discuss them as he did so.

Although, being a merchant, he had not had the advantages of a classical education, he had a deep reverence for books and declared himself as being determined, when his active days should be over, to retire to the hills and live the life of a hermit.

He and I, as well as the members of our house staff, were obliged to talk pidgin English together. Nor did the grave old gentleman ever lose dignity in using what some people consider ridiculous jargon. Philanthropy was his hobby and probity was his boast. I remember his saying solemnly to me one day: 'Missisee, my b'long square. All same table.'

His mother, a most exquisite old lady of nearly ninety, left her home in the Chusan Islands, for the first time in her life, during the Revolution of 1913, and he brought her to tea with me. I shall never forget the picture they made as they walked round the garden of Wild Goose Happiness House. He wore an old-gold robe and a short coat of crimson brocade, while she was dressed





in the sober greys suitable to a lady of her age. Her feet were the smallest 'Golden Lilies' that I have ever seen. They cannot have been more than three inches long, so she was obliged to lean on her son's arm when she made a slow swaying progress round the garden. I have never seen an old lady of any nationality of more exquisite dignity and refinement. She paused to examine attentively each flower, each plant, pointing out their peculiar beauties.

The compradore's wife never came to see me, as the old gentleman was very conservative, and did not think that the 'ladies of his inner apartments' should visit abroad. He felt, indeed, that a person who stood in so intimate a relation to him as his wife should not even be mentioned. Our friendship lasted until his death, and I owe to him much of my understanding of his native country.

#### A MOST SUCCESSFUL PARTY

Now and again, Wild Goose Happiness House was the scene of a special party, and one of those that I remember most vividly took place in the Grass Hut, in 1927. We had returned to China for the winter, and at the Chinese New Year time I invited all the Chinese who had ever been in our employ to come to tea with their families. Two hundred people came. They had almost to be inserted into the Grass Hut with a shoehorn!

It was typical China New Year weather: snow, hail, wind, rain. In the morning Amah had mournfully told me that certain elderly Chinese ladies, whom we expected, would not be able to go out in such weather. But

I was determined they *should* come, so I sent my car to bring as many as it would hold, and sent taxis for the rest of the old people.

The first guests arrived before noon, but I, knowing the ways of Chinese guests, had stipulated that I should not be expected before two. I had asked Amah what I should wear, and she chose what was I believe the most conspicuous dress I have ever possessed: a ball dress made of heavy, shining gold lace! In this I duly appeared as the clock struck two on this cold winter's afternoon! — to the admiration of all, I hope, since I myself was feeling extremely silly.

I greeted my guests, old and young (some being still in arms), and then began the first excitement of the afternoon. I photographed them group by group, family by family. From two till four I plodded on, a black cloth over my head, while they posed against the white sheet flanked by palms I had prepared as a background. Finally every face was preserved for posterity, for of course I was to present every guest with a copy of his picture.

Then I retired for a short rest while the two hundred took their tea. A second thrill, as of course it was foreign tea, prepared with milk and sugar, a novelty to them. Besides, they had foreign cakes as well as the Chinese delicacies. Then followed the third and final thrill of the day. I showed them beautiful lantern-slide pictures painted by my American friend, Lucille Douglass, and it was after eight o'clock in the evening when the last guest left. I have had any number of parties in my life, but this was undoubtedly the most successful!

## AMY LOWELL

So it was that, through my studies and my acquaintance with the Chinese people around me, my insight into their minds and my understanding of them grew with the years. But even so, I should never have been able to express in my books all that I wished had it not been for two American friends who have had a vital part in the working-out of my plans — Amy Lowell and Lucille Douglass.

Amy Lowell and I were not schoolfellows, during my childhood and girlhood visits to America. But we did spend a great deal of time together. And even when she was living in Boston, she used often to run out to 'Sevenels' in Brookline, the country house where she had been born. I delighted in going with her and delighted also in the long drives we then took. Fast horses were one of her passions and she handled the reins with consummate skill. Such discussions as we had, punctuated by the sharp click of trotting hoofs and the swish of autumn leaves cut apart by the carriage wheels!

Then came years of separation. I married and returned to China, and there became absorbed in the study of the Chinese language, art, and literature. Meanwhile, Amy Lowell travelled, for pleasure and interest, and began to write the poetry and prose which brought her such renown. Sevenels in Brookline was her headquarters and a meeting-place for the poets and writers of the day.

Periodically, through these years, I returned to Boston and always saw her. But it was not until 1917 that

we began literary work together. By that time, she was recognized as one of the leaders in American letters and had already published a number of books.

Our first collaboration came about in this way: I was on a visit to her at Sevenels, which had then been transformed and beautified far beyond what it had been in our childhood days. And I had with me a number of Chinese 'written pictures' or 'hanging-on-the-wall' poems, which the Chinese consider far more beautiful than any painted representation of any object. I read to Miss Lowell my literal translation of these poems and she became fascinated with them, longing to render them into an English poetic form.

Now it must not be imagined that what she had in mind was working from my translation alone. From the time we first began to play with the idea, we both realized that it would be impossible for her to give an adequate rendering of the poet's thought unless she knew exactly the words in which he had clothed it. So, Chinese character by Chinese character, and line by line, we worked together upon the 'hanging-on-the-wall' poems. I translated and Miss Lowell made careful notes. And while working in this way, she made a discovery which I believe will be far-reaching in its results in our understanding of the Chinese language.

She promptly made the discovery that frequently an analysis of a Chinese character, rendered by a phrase instead of by a single word, made the meaning of a line far more vivid.

The way the discovery came about was this: We were at work upon a poem and I read aloud the character *mo*. 'It means "sunset,"' I said. And then added

casually, 'The character shows the sun disappearing in the long grass at the edge of the horizon.' For, as you have perhaps noticed, each Chinese character looks somewhat of a tiny picture — a resemblance which is truly related to the facts in the case, for Chinese writing has, indeed, come from pictures. But of that I shall tell you later.

'How do you mean?' asked Miss Lowell.

'Why, what I say,' I replied, and went on to show her the character or pictogram in its ancient form, which shows plainly the sun sinking behind tufts of grass on the far-off horizon.

She was more enthralled than ever, and insisted that I give her a long dissertation on the composition of Chinese characters, a subject that has always been of intense interest to me, but which I had never thought of applying in translation.

Although the Chinese have no alphabet, they build up their characters from a set of two hundred and fourteen chosen forms, which are pictograms or ideographs. We who are Westerners, or Occidentals, call these forms the 'Radicals.' But the Chinese refer to them as ideograph 'Mothers' or 'Origins.' One of these 'Mothers' appears in every written Chinese character. And it is in the section headed by its 'Mother' that a character must be looked up in a Chinese dictionary.

Miss Lowell's accuracy was amazing. I often said, 'This line means so and so.'

Her invariable reply was, 'Yes, but what does it say?' And then she would try to render the Chinese idiom, or employ the metaphor used, as nearly as might be in a different language.

Our work soon developed from the translating and rendering of the 'hanging-on-the-wall' poems to a plan which would include a wider range of Chinese poets. And we definitely set ourselves to the producing of a book together. As a rule, we worked side by side, until about two in the morning.

Then I would leave her and go to bed, but she would not climb the stairs to her room under the eaves until the sun was high and the world was wide awake. As she passed, she would leave little slips of yellow paper on the table by my door upon which she had written the results of her solitary cogitations. These I would study and then discuss with her. The result of our collaboration was the volume: 'Fir-Flower Tablets: Poems Translated from the Chinese.'

What each of us contributed to the book, in this way, was delightfully described by Mr. Nung Chu, my Chinese teacher, when, later, I had given him a copy of 'Fir-Flower Tablets' and he had read it. Mr. Nung Chu did not speak English, but he could read a little, and, when I asked him if he had enjoyed the book, he replied, 'The writing-brush of Madam Ai's friend is full of life's movement.'

'Ah, yes,' I said, 'and that, you see, is what Heaven does. Anyone with patience and your help could do my part. But hers is a gift from Heaven.'

'Not wrong,' he assented. 'The words of Madam Ai are a little not wrong. But perhaps she has not heard a saying that we have in China: "What is the beauty of the peony flower without its green leaves?"'

Well, I was very content to be the green leaves which showed up the beauty of Amy Lowell's peony flowers.

And among the happiest hours of my life are those I spent with her in the long library at Sevenels, trying to make clear to her the thoughts of Chinese poets, long dead.

Brilliant, witty, full of humour, and very decided in her opinions was Amy Lowell. Arguing with her was like plunging into a deep blue wave! One was completely submerged.

We frequently agreed to disagree. Herself the soul of truth, she was absolutely intolerant of insincerity. Affectation met with short shrift at her hands, and, when she chose to chide, her words were veritable scorpions. Her powers of application were incredible, and, in spite of much ill health and suffering, she worked from dark until dawn, sparing herself never at all.

When the book went to press, I left for Canada, there to spend a few weeks before my husband and I returned to China. The reading of proofs like those of 'Fir-Flower Tablets,' in which there were innumerable Chinese names, is maddening! And poor Miss Lowell, who knew no Chinese, had to tackle them single-handed.

Night after night, in far-off New Brunswick, as midnight, the dawn of Miss Lowell's working day, approached, the telephone would ring. Rising from my bed, I would perch myself upon a chair by the telephone and hear Central say, 'Brookline calling.' In those days the connection was not so direct as it is now, and I would hear St. Andrews ask Calais, and Calais ask Portland, and Portland ask Portsmouth, and Portsmouth ask Boston, who finally put me through to Brookline and Amy Lowell's harassed voice demanding, 'Is there

a dieresis over the *u* in *yu*, such and such line from the end, poem so and so?’

It was even worse when the connection was bad and the centrals had to relay inquiries, saying, for instance, ‘Brookline asks are the words *tui tzu* or are they *toi tao*?’

I, perched in my nightgown with the manuscript slithering about on my knees, struggled manfully to give intelligible replies to these queries launched through the air.

I left for China before the book appeared, and on my way across the continent received a hastily pencilled letter full of last urgent questions. Amy Lowell was renowned for her brilliance, her wit, and sometimes for her ruthlessness. But the sentences I quote from this letter show a side of her character not usually suspected:

You have been an angel to me. A monument of patience. I am not easy to work with, I know. I get so excited, and I think only of the work and not at all of anyone’s feelings. Forgive me for all my many faults and omissions, and please believe how very grateful I am for your wonderful sympathy and understanding. But we must do other books. This is too good to be the only one. So dash into Tu Fu, my dear; we are still almost alone in that field.

The last time that I saw her was just after her ‘John Keats’ was ready for the press. She looked terribly ill, and, when I parted from her one snowy December evening as the sunset shone with an orange glow, my heart was full of apprehension which turned out to be but too well founded.

Meanwhile, I wrote a book of essays called ‘A Chi-



nese Mirror.' The dedication to that book tells the rest of the story. It reads:

TO  
AMY LOWELL

WHOSE WRITING-BRUSH IS FULL OF LIFE'S MOVEMENT

FROM

FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

Since I wrote the Dedication to this book the sun has risen from out of a sea mist, has climbed to its zenith, and has sunk in the long grass at the edge of the horizon twenty-three times; and yesterday at the hour when her room, high under the eaves, is filled with its slant shining, Amy Lowell laid down her writing-brush for ever.

Scissors cannot cut this thing;  
Unravelling, it joins again and clings.  
It is the sorrow of separation,  
And none other tastes to the heart like this.  
[By a Chinese poet *circa* A.D. 950.]

F. A.

May, 1925.

Amy Lowell is dead. I can no longer turn to her for help, but the lessons she taught me are ever fresh in my mind. If, when translating, I am tempted to think, 'Oh! he must *mean* so and so,' I am suddenly transported in fancy to the long library at Sevenels. The bright fire crackles, the orchids throw strange shadows in the lamplight, the books on their shelves glow with colour as only books can do, and her voice, clear and incisive, seems to ask, 'Yes! but what does he *say*?'

LUCILLE DOUGLASS

I have spoken of the 'Chinese Mirror,' the book which I dedicated to Amy Lowell, and it is in connection with

that book that I would first speak of Lucille Douglass.

Amy Lowell was a New-Englander to her backbone, I always regard myself as a 'citizen of the world,' and Lucille Douglass is a Southerner to her finger-tips! Born in Tuskegee, Alabama, her childhood was passed in the large house to which her grandmother had been taken as a bride; the children of her grandfather's slaves still lived in the old quarters and she was in charge of a typical Negro Mammy.

By the time she was nine, Lucille Douglass had decided to travel all over the world. This decision was much influenced by a book called 'Zig-Zag Journeys in Many Lands,' from the pen of a certain Hezekiah Butterworth. Meanwhile, she lived quietly in Tuskegee. Her mother was an artist and taught her little girl to draw as the child learned to read and write. It was, therefore, perfectly natural that, faced at the age of seventeen with the necessity of earning her own living, Lucille Douglass chose the career of a painter. She decided, however, that if she were to paint she must paint well, so to Paris she went as a student.

There she studied during the winter, and in summer worked out-of-doors in Holland, Spain, Italy, and Northern Africa. Her career seemed assured, her paintings were exhibited in Salon d'Automne, 1911, and for the Société des Indépendants in the same year, but the Great War crashed upon the world, and artists were obliged to lay aside their brushes and turn to other work. The work Lucille Douglass chose took her to a hospital, where she served on the staff until the War was over.

Then, in 1920, her Far Eastern wanderings began.

She came to Shanghai and we became fast friends. I liked her work and felt that she caught the spirit of China and her people to an unusual degree. Therefore, when I had written the 'Chinese Mirror,' I felt that she was the one person to illustrate it.

At first she demurred, saying, 'I am a painter. I have never done pen-and-ink drawings.'

'But you can do them. I am sure you can,' I replied.

In the end, she acceded to my request. And you may judge how triumphantly successful her work was, from the illustrations in this book, some of which are those first drawings which Miss Douglass made when she and I were in Shanghai together.

The pen-and-ink drawing interested her so greatly that she decided to study etching. And a year or two ago, the French Colonial Government invited her to go and stay at the ruins of Angkor in Indo-China and make a series of etchings there. From that time until now, the study of Angkor has been her principal interest, and her lectures on the Royal City of the vanished Khmer Kingdom have been given before many audiences in America and England.

And so it was that not only from my studies but from my friends, both Chinese and American, grew my books and the writing that ever since has been a fascinating part of my days. Each of these, my friends, has had a share in that work. And the memories of them all I cherish.

## CHAPTER IV

### PICTURES FROM A LITTLE DOG'S WRITING-BRUSH FOUR IRON-GREY HORSES

A team of iron-grey horses, fine and sleek,  
Reins grasped in the hand of the charioteer.  
The smirking sycophants of the Prince  
Follow their Lord to the winter's hunt on ground burned bare.

Driven by the huntsmen, the male animals in season rush forward.  
Magnificent are the male animals in season!  
The Prince shouts, 'To their left.'  
He lets fly the barbed arrows and meets his mark.

The hunt over, they drive round the northern park;  
The four horses display their schooling.  
Bird-bells at the horses' bits, the light carts  
Are loaded with the hunting dogs; long-nosed dogs and proud  
    little dogs with short muzzles.

    TU FU: *The Classic of Poetry*



## CHAPTER IV

### *Pictures from a Little Dog's Writing-Brush*

YO FEI DESCRIBES HIS COUNTRY AND HIS COUNTRYMEN

AND now I come to a most important member of our household — Yo Fei. Who shall say that only human beings are of importance in the scheme of things? Certainly not the Missuss of Little Yo Fei!

Yo Fei was a tiger-headed Lo-sze dog — rather, I should say, *is*, for he is still alive and venerable, indeed. He came from Shantung, the province where Confucius lived and died. Dogs of his type are probably the prototype of the English pug. They are short-mouthed, have short thick hair, and very loose, elastic skins. They are extraordinarily intelligent and are highly prized by the Chinese who treat them exactly as though they were members of the family. They are difficult to find and almost impossible to buy.

Years ago, in a Shantung city, I met a man whose clothes were of a mean description. But he was walking along in the street with a beautiful specimen of a Lo-sze. I stopped and admired the dog. Would he sell it? No, the dog was not for sale. It seemed impossible to believe that an obviously needy person would not be tempted by yellow gold, and, to my shame be it said, I argued at length, offering finally what must have seemed to him a fabulous sum. Then the countryman, who, until that moment had controlled himself with perfect politeness, lost his temper and roared out, 'The dog is

not for sale!' And, turning on his heel, he strode down the street.

This happened many years ago. Looking back, it is difficult for me to conceive myself capable of such very



MY LITTLE YO FEI

*t'su* — that is, coarse or untutored behaviour. There was no excuse for it. I can only say that when it happened I was still in the trammels of that point of view unfortunately held by many Occidentals in regard to the Chinese.

'Oh, a Chinaman will sell anything.' Nine out of ten foreigners make such an assertion with no inkling of its

fundamental untruth, and with no realization that the word 'Chinaman' is itself offensive to Chinese ears.

I have often reflected sadly upon this incident as a salutary lesson, and when little Yo Fei, my Chinese dog, was given to me, I told Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos about it. He shook his head sadly and said, 'I think Love-Poetry-Mother does not quite understand how we people of the Middle Country feel about little dogs. A man who has one will let it sleep by his pillow. If he has a friend whom he loves, he may give him a puppy as a present. A little dog is not a thing that we like to buy or sell, though, of course, a man may be forced by poverty to part with even his most precious possession.'

Yo Fei belonged, in his early youth, to an Irish lady, to whom he had been presented by a Chinese hospital dispenser. She christened him 'Buster.' Hearing that I wanted a Lo-sze, she sent me word that, being obliged to leave China, she would give me her dog who was hardly more than a puppy. I accepted the offer without seeing Buster and waited patiently for the moment of her departure.

One rainy afternoon, when walking along the beach, I noticed a most disreputable little cur eagerly consuming fish-tails on the high-water line, and my companion said, 'There is the dog you are going to have.' My heart failed, he was so bedraggled, so utterly abandoned in appearance. However, in course of time he arrived at our house, a most unwilling guest, and then ensued weeks of struggle over which we will draw a veil.

It was very hard for Buster to adapt himself to a life of restraint. The beach and fish-tails called him. It



was pain and grief to be tubbed, though he found it a great relief to be relieved of at least a million fleas. He fell ill, was soundly dosed. His name was changed. He had to wear a harness with bells in order that he might the more easily be tracked upon the numerous occasions when he ran away. It was all very difficult, but gradually his brindle coat improved, his tail, which had not been docked in the ordinary way, took on a double curl, and Yo Fei began to enjoy the luxuries of civilization which Buster had found intolerable.

The change was so noticeable that one day, when the little dog was trotting proudly down the wharf, his coat shining with a golden sheen, his tail in a stiff whorl, I overheard a fisherman, who of course had known him in his fish-tail days, remark to another, 'How rich we are! Like the Great Old Ear, exactly the same.' *Ta lao yeh* — Great Old Ear — I may say, is the title respectfully given to high officials.

Yo Fei also had a great idea of his own importance and brooked no rival. When the Grass Hut was being built, the contractor Ping Yung brought with him a miserable little black-and-white kitten. It roamed about the worksheds day after day, but Yo Fei, although he often passed it, never so much as glanced at the harmless little beast.

But one day he and Amah made a visit of inspection to the work and she carried with her some titbits with which she regaled him from time to time. Her eye fell upon the pathetic little cat, and, following a kindly impulse, she thoughtlessly gave it a bit of food. Like a flash Yo Fei fell upon the creature, which was rescued with some difficulty from an early death.

I heard nothing of this incident, so later in the day was much surprised when, before my very eyes, and for no apparent reason, Yo Fei fell upon the kitten in a furious rage. I rescued it and chastised Yo Fei. It was the first time that such a thing had ever been necessary. My method of obtaining perfect obedience from the Great Old Ear is by tactfully avoiding any command which might be distasteful to him. Thus perfect harmony reigns between us, and upon the occasion of this abrupt correction, I do not know whether he or I suffered the more. At all events, I shall never forget the look of astonished horror in his huge brown eyes when my hand fell upon him. The next morning, however, when the sun crossed the horizon, Yo Fei left the house, made directly for the Grass Hut, and swiftly killed that kitten.

From the day he came to me, Yo Fei had a most unusual life. He has made the journey between China and New Brunswick three separate times. He has travelled many times up the Chinese coast with me, and has often accompanied me on houseboat trips into the interior. He went with me on my daily expeditions in and about Shanghai, and always lay curled at my feet listening to the discussions of Chinese poetry between myself and Mr. Nung. Now, an elderly and most dignified Chinese gentleman of thirteen years, he is living in Vienna. To my sorrow I was obliged to leave him there, as the quarantine regulations on the rocky island of Guernsey, where I now live, would have required him to spend six months in a cage. I considered these conditions too onerous for a gentleman of his age and standing, for the little Lo-sze dog whom I found

eating fish-tails on the Wei-Hai-Wei beach has grown into a 'Great Old Ear,' indeed.

His muzzle has turned grey. He has grown venerable with the years. And he is now amazingly impressive. How impressive is well illustrated by the following incident, which occurred not long ago when the Orientalist Congress was meeting in Vienna. A learned professor, director of a Berlin museum, himself a person of great dignity, came with me down the steps of the University towards my car. There, in his own seat beside the chauffeur, sat Yo Fei. The Herr Professor stopped short, clicked his heels together, took off his hat, and bowed gravely to the little dog before getting in beside me. I laughed, but he said earnestly, 'To a person of such dignity how could one do otherwise?'

But during our stay in China, he was quite different. Then he was of a lively and inquiring disposition and I always felt that he was fully aware of everything that went on around him. I felt, too, that he understood his country and his country-people. And one day, upon impulse and as a change from my translating, I began imagining what the experiences of his life had been. Jotting these thoughts idly upon paper, the thought came to me, 'Why not write Yo Fei's autobiography?'

The idea appealed to me, and I set to work, eventually completing and publishing it under the title, 'The Autobiography of a Chinese Dog.' And because so many of Yo Fei's experiences were also my own, because I saw so many of the same things as he, from day to day, I shall now add selections from Yo Fei's autobiography to my collection of 'Pictures of the Chinese World.'

IN THE PROVINCE EAST OF THE MOUNTAIN  
(YO FEI SPEAKING)

I was born in China, in a little hamlet among the rocky mountains of Shantung — Province 'East-of-the-Mountain,' and a very noted Province, too. We Chinese believe that creatures partake of the nature of the soil they spring from, and that the most noble are born among hills. I do not doubt that there is something in this belief. The great Confucius was born in Shantung, so was his disciple Mencius. In their day dogs of my breed, the Lo-sze, were used in the pursuit of game, so naturally I have a love of the chase in my blood. Whether Mother had this love or not, I really do not know. She could not leave us puppies at first, and I started on my life of travel when but two months old. It was the period of White Dew in early Autumn, and during the daytime the sun was so hot that we puppies often sought shade after our game. The little boys with whom we had been playing wore scarlet embroidered aprons, their summer clothing; the little girls, long wide silk trousers and no coats. The fields were full of waving 'tall millet' nearly ready for cutting and the pomegranates were beginning to ripen. Soon the threshing-floor would be in use, but meanwhile it was a grand place for children and puppies to explore.

Our hamlet was called 'Li Chai,' or the 'Home of the Pear-Tree Clan,' and one day I heard old Grandmother say that her son Pear-Tree Three was coming home to see her. She was inordinately proud of Pear-Tree Three, who had gone away from home to study foreign medicine. Pear-Trees One and Two cultivated the

family land and reared wild silkworms on the scrub-oak of the hillsides; they looked the honest farmers they were, but Pear-Tree Three — ah, he was very different! When he climbed the hill to our little house dressed in strange clothes, I could not imagine who he was, but my mother knew him and greeted him joyfully. He was evidently very fond of her; he stroked her gently, and admired us, her babies, one by one.

At sundown, when the air began to be chilly, we puppies snuggled up to Mother and she lay close to Pear-Tree Three while he ate his evening meal, ignoring the Confucian tenet that meals should be eaten in silence. On the contrary, he talked steadily; about the busy place he came from, the strange work he did; and then he remarked casually that the foreign doctor's little girl wanted a *ha pa*, or 'short-mouthed laughing dog,' which is what the country people call us Lo-sze. I hardly noticed his words at the time. I was sleepy, and Mother was nice and warm.

Three days later, however, when the sun's light was still concealed behind the hills, Pear-Tree Three bent over Mother, stroked her gently, murmured a few words to her, and then — why, then he picked me up from by her side, pushed me in the breast of his coat, and carried me away. When the sun rose above the far horizon, its level rays shone full in the eyes of Pear-Tree Three who was following the 'bird's path' leading from the hilltops to the sea. He carried me, a tiny yellow puppy, in his arms, and I suddenly realized that I was the *ha pa* dog destined for the foreign doctor's little girl! I felt very, very small.

## MY FIRST FOREIGN MISSUSS

She was not so bad. Of course, she did not look like my dear little dark-eyed, black-haired Golden Bells with whom I was used to playing on the threshing-floor. Oh, no — quite different — Nellie's hair was the colour of straw, and her eyes pale, like washed-out blue rags; but she was very nice and I loved her dearly.

Golden Bells had called me 'Little Apricot' because of my beautiful colour, but Nelly called me 'Buster,' I don't know why. At all events, we played together all day, and I slept in a basket at the foot of her bed all night. We were very happy as the months rolled by. I grew from a puppy to quite a respectable dog; the cold winter passed; spring with its blossoms came and went. summer arrived; and then something dreadful happened; The house was all upset; boxes and trunks were brought in; Nellie and her mother went away. Everybody seemed too busy to bother about me or my food. I felt very, very lost.

## MY SECOND FOREIGN MISSUSS

Wei-Hai-Wei, the place we lived in, lay by the sea, and this was fortunate, as when my meals were too sketchy, I could hurry to the beach, where I was sure to find a fish-tail or two amongst the rubbish at the high-water line; and because of my loneliness I consoled myself by playing with the dogs of very mixed ancestry who haunted this same beach. It was quite amusing.

One rainy afternoon I was searching the water-line for titbits when I noticed two foreign ladies strolling on the shore. One said to the other, 'There is the dog you are

to have — that brindle one on the beach.' The other lady made an ejaculation and hurried away. However, before I had half-finished my fish-tail she returned, and with her came the Doctor's House-Boy. He picked me up in the most undignified manner — had I realized his intention I should have run away — the lady carried my basket, and we started off together up the hill to a house I had never seen before, and there the Boy put me down.

The lady, I will admit, tried to be nice to me, but I couldn't bear her. Human beings are most extraordinary: they expect a dog to be quite ready to make friends on the instant. I wouldn't eat her supper. I didn't like her room. There was a string around my neck, or I should have gone home at once. Bedtime came and she said, 'I think Buster will sleep well in his basket,' and then took off the string. She was right. I was so tired from annoyance that I did sleep, until dawn. Then, feeling quite fresh, I determined to take matters into my own paws and leave. The verandah was nicely enclosed with mosquito netting, but after all it is not very difficult to scratch a hole in a netting. I made a very large one, and before long was hurrying home. The Boy seemed surprised to see me, and not at all pleased. In fact he was very short, and calling the coolie sent me up the hill again!

That night I determined to make a vocal demonstration. This I did at one A.M. The lady had worked hard to amuse me all day long, but when I began to scream she picked me up, and threw me out into the starlit night, exclaiming, 'I hope I shall never see you again!' But she did. I reached home, only to be scolded

by Boy, caught by the coolie and carried up the hill once more. This time the lady seemed no more glad to see me than I was to see her, and goodness knows if we ever should have made friends if I had not fallen ill. We Chinese dogs are like that; we make friends very slowly, but friends once made are friends forever. I was very ill. I decided to die. Missuss, however, made me change my mind by pouring egg-nogs down my throat. I screamed when she did it, but I had to lick my chops afterwards; there was quite a pleasant taste of sugar and whiskey, and I began to feel the glow of returning health.

#### I CHANGE MY NAME

The coast-line of China is not especially jagged as coast-lines go, but between the thirty-sixth and thirty-eighth parallels of latitude, the Promontory of Shantung thrusts its bold outline into the depths. At this point the water of the Yellow Sea is no longer coloured by sediment from the Great River, but sparkles in the clear atmosphere, larkspur blue. Flat-bottomed coast steamers move in a very strange manner as they round the point and passengers are as a rule extremely glad to reach the deep-cut bay which stretches to the south and east of Wei-Hai-Wei. The name means 'Outpost-of-Defence-by-the-Awe-Inspiring Sea.' High hills encircle it west and north, so that the little walled city lies in a veritable sun-trap, and even cold winter days are tempered, while summer heat is mitigated by the southwest monsoon, which sweeps across the water, cooler here than it is south of the Promontory.

Even so, it was fairly hot and during the sun-high



hours of the day, we were apt to stay indoors. I had a delightful shallow round basket which Amah called my 'official residence'; and I cannot imagine that in the wide world more comfortable baskets can exist than those found in the 'Outpost of Defence.' They are pretty, too, in their weave, and Missuss always covered mine with a square of deep purple raw silk, most becoming, in colour, to me. Staying indoors was, therefore, no hardship; I simply curled up and dozed. While I dozed, Missuss studied with Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos whom she called '*hsien shêng*' — 'prior-born' — a term my country-people apply to fathers, elder brothers, or people who instruct them. As a rule, he and she translated Chinese poetry together, and many letters travelled back and forth between Missuss and a person to whom she seemed very devoted. Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos always referred to this person as 'Love-Poetry-Mother's Friend.' I learned that her surname was 'Lowell' and her name 'Amy.'

When not translating poetry, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos chatted about Chinese history ancient and modern, and one day Missuss asked what had inspired him to play the active part which he did in the Revolution of 1911. He replied instantly, 'The life of Yo Fei.' He then proceeded to talk at great length about this hero of the twelfth century, who devoted his life to the defence of his country, and who finally died through treachery.

The teacher described, too, in a most vivid way, the ceremony which took place at Peking in 1915 when the spirit of Yo Fei was raised to an equality with that of Kuan Ti, the Patron Saint of Bravery — generally



THE SUN-HIGH HOURS OF THE DAY

called by Europeans the 'God of War.' At the same time the spirits of twenty-four other celebrated military leaders and patriots were admitted to the Military Temple as their associates.

This reorganization of what may be called the Cult of Heroes was prompted by the desire to raise in public estimation the profession of arms, and it is before the Military Temple that present-day soldiers are supposed to take their oaths. There are no images in the temple, but simply plain narrow strips of wood, each bearing the spirit title of the hero it represents, and the tablets of Kuan Ti and Yo Fei, which stand in the centre, are larger than the others. Kuan Ti is called the Marquis of Martial Dignity, and Yo Fei, to whom Young China especially turns its eyes, is named the Prince of Loyalty and Courage.

Now, Missuss, who was growing very fond of me, had often spoken of changing my name 'Buster' to something more in keeping with my personality. It appeared that her pets were always called after famous people; a strange Western custom which is incredibly disrespectful in the eyes of my country-people. She had been undecided as to which Chinese hero should provide me with a suitable cognomen; but she was undecided no longer. Stirred by Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos' words, she rose from her chair, crossed the room to my basket, and, bending over me, exclaimed impulsively, 'Prior-Born, we will call the little thing — Yo Fei.'

#### DAILY LIFE

We Chinese feel very strongly on the subject of names, and look upon them as something to be faithfully lived

up to. We often alter them during our lives as new avenues open to us, so it seemed quite natural to me that, when my condition changed greatly, my name should change too. Not that I entirely approved of all these innovations.

At first some things in my new life were most irksome. The 'jinrickshaw coolies,' for instance, annoyed me to a turn! They were forever 'keeping an eye on me,' and I found it difficult to escape their attentions, except at night. Naturally I longed to visit my old haunts, but, after I had given our coolies the slip for several evenings running, they insisted that I have a harness with bells. The bells were brass and very pretty. The character for 'King' was moulded on them, thus suggesting the tiger, 'King of beasts,' and a protection against evil influences. My brindle coat added to this illusion; and as I jingled through the villages, children called after me, 'There goes the little tiger.' I realized that the bells added to my appearance, so rather liked them in the end, and they were certainly a great comfort to the jinrickshaw coolies.

A 'coolie' is, speaking literally, a person who earns his living by the exertion of *k'u* — 'bitter,' *li* — 'strength.' A 'jinrickshaw,' as all the world knows, is a funny little carriage on two wheels drawn by a man who runs between the shafts. What all the world does not know, however, is that these little carriages are not a Chinese conveyance at all, but were brought to my country from Japan where they were invented by an American missionary. The word 'jinrickshaw' is a corruption of the Chinese name for this vehicle, *jên li ch'e*, 'man's-strength-carriage.'

In cities the life of a 'rickshaw coolie' is dreadful, and the people whom he draws in his carriage are often thoughtless and cruel, urging him on, swearing at him, prodding him, and sometimes striking him. Even if his passenger be kind, the conditions under which he works are very trying. In winter, between fares, he must sit, all perspiring though he be, in an icy wind or driving rain, with only the scant protection afforded by his blue cotton coat; in summer he must strain every muscle to run in the devastating heat. Some kind-hearted people will not hire 'rickshaws' — and then the coolie starves.

In Wei-Hai-Wei conditions were very different. As the roads were hilly, Missuss had two coolies, who were in her sole employ. One ambled in a dignified manner between the shafts, and the other, a loose-limbed giant, pushed the little carriage from behind. Towards dusk every day we went out, and we often took the shore road. Arrived at the beach, the coolies would put down the 'rickshaw shafts and we all watched the fishing boats, painted to resemble monsters of the deep, as they made for home before the sunset breeze.

Tall coolie was loquacious and conversed fluently as he pushed. Before I came to Missuss, she had hunted in hillside villages for a 'short-mouthed laughing dog,' and the coolies had pushed her from one hamlet to the next, between the fields of sweet potatoes, peanuts, and millet: both tall millet and short millet with curled ears like green caterpillars. Tall coolie was anxious that Missuss should have a puppy. 'Otherwise,' he said, 'the *ha pa* will not understand your words.' Now this was very sensible on his part. Humans seldom stop to con-



THE FISHING BOATS, PAINTED TO RESEMBLE THE MONSTERS  
OF THE DEEP

sider that animals who are accustomed to hearing one language, do not necessarily understand another.

I have not yet described my own appearance. The pictures Miss Douglass has made will help my readers to visualize me; but I will also quote part of a letter which I wrote to a gentleman Missuss met when she was travelling on the Great River. Later Miss Douglass met the same gentleman, and found that he had been much interested in me. I therefore wrote him as follows:

Dear Mr. Consul X—:

I was very much touched by the message you sent me by Miss Douglass. I like appreciation and never forget my friends, so when she told me that you wanted my picture, I was glad that Missuss had taken a new roll of photographs, some of which are quite good. I enclose them herewith. Of course I cannot feel — and I am sure you would agree with me, were you in a position to judge — that they do me justice. Nor is it for me to tell you about my lovely brindle coat which shines with such a sheen that Missuss calls me her 'gold silk *ha pa*'; of my silver paws; — you know, I suppose, that the Chinese consider a yellow dog with white legs a 'dog of luck?' — of my enormous brown eyes that sometimes gleam with a green or red light; my sable ears; my coal-black muzzle; my immaculate white waistcoat; my deep frog mouth; my little white teeth; or my astounding intelligence; Miss Douglass will do all this.

There is, however, one point which she may miss; a point of which I am duly proud — my tail. It is a perfect *ch'ih wei* which means 'Owl Tail'; that is the name of the creature which holds the roof spine of houses in its mouth, and throws its tail into a perfect circle above its head. Now my tail makes a perfect circle, and more, and the tip for an inch or two is silver white. You can imagine how lovely this looks with my orange coat!!

I wish we might meet. Missuss told me what pleasure it

had given her to travel with you, and from what she said I feel sure that you would enjoy taking me for walks. When I see a dog, no matter the size, I put my head down, and raise the hair on my back. I then advance on him, going faster and faster every second. He generally runs and I have a glorious chase, but if he doesn't, I hurl myself at him and bite him in the seat of the pants, and that of course annoys him a good deal. The other morning, however, I had rather a bad time. I did this to a lady dog (forgive the mark, it is a misnomer), and if you will believe it, she turned on me, seized me by the neck, and hurled me into the air! I came down plop — it was awfully painful; I didn't enjoy the rest of my walk especially, as, in addition, I was nearly drowned.

Do you know that dreadful weed which makes a pond look like a lawn? Well, I jumped onto what I thought — any dog would have done the same — was a lawn, and, God bless me, it was a pond! Naturally I can swim, and like to, but what the reason was I do not know, my hindquarters would not come up, and Missuss says that, when she turned, she was horrified to see me pawing the air with a look of desperation in my wonderful eyes. She realized that I was rapidly sinking! The water was up to my nose. Imagine how she felt!! She hurled herself on her face, and caught me by the hair of my head — very painful, but I didn't realize it at the time — and hauled me out of the water onto dry land. It was a relief!! You see my life is varied, but on the whole is pleasant.

My humans are very well trained, both those above and those below stairs, and Missuss knows that to have a perfectly obedient dog she must never ask him to do anything he does not want to. I am thankful to say she lives up to this principle. My 'Uncle Peter,' her Lord and Master, is very fond of me and gives me all sorts of titbits; besides, he often takes me walking, and, when I ask to go out in the motor-car, says, 'Oh, let the little devil come.' So I go, and wear my green silk harness from the Burlington Arcade. The rest of the household is even more under my paw. You will see my greatest friend Amah photographed with me. She de-



fleas me, brushes, combs, and washes me. The last process is hateful, but one is comfortable afterwards, don't you think so?

Missuss sends her very kindest regards.

Yours truly,

YO FEI

WILD GOOSE HAPPINESS HOUSE IN THE  
CITY-ABOVE-THE-SEA

We next went to live in Wild Goose Happiness House on the Yellow Reach above the Sea, and as I passed some time there perhaps I should describe the inmates I found.

There was William, a very old fox terrier, and, although I tried hard to please him, he was never enthusiastic about my coming. However, he was a good watch dog and taught me to be very careful about any suspicious characters who might come near the place. He did the chasing, and, as he had no teeth, was glad to have me do the biting.

Then there were two huge cats, Curzon and Kitchener. I learned that although not brothers they were kittens of the same season, and had come to Wild Goose Happiness House within a few weeks of each other, many, many years ago. They were not like our beautiful cats of Shantung, which have long soft white hair and eyes of two colours — that is, one blue eye and one greenish grey; oh, no, they were brownish cats with a black glossy pattern all over them. Curzon was a dear old thing, but Kitchener!!! Never, never have I met with such self-satisfied, intolerable egotism, conceit, and indifference. Stretched in the sun he would allow Curzon to lick him clean instead of doing it himself. They were

always together, and Curzon was always in attendance on Kitchener. Indeed, when they died, quite an interesting article called 'Master and Man' appeared about them in the local paper, so famous were these cats.

Of the humans the most important were Amah and Achay.

Amah came from a fishing village down the coast where she owned a house and land, and she often chatted about her neighbours there, describing how the wives of the fishermen would 'walkee walkee all night' when a storm raged and their men were at sea. She went home for a month when her son was married and told us wonderful stories about the feast she had given to a hundred people and more; about the roast ox and boiled sheep she had provided; and about the fine trousseau the bride had brought home.

Amah had been in charge of Missuss since the end of the last century and was very capable, indeed, even if sometimes severe. She looked upon the house as largely hers and behaved accordingly. One day Missuss begged her to be careful about some incense sticks which were burning before the Empress of Heaven. Amah replied in a soothing tone, as though reasoning with a little child, 'You house b'long my house. My no wantchee burn house.' Missuss said no more! Amah took charge of me when I arrived and cared for me day and night. During the mosquito season, she always covered me with a contraption which looked like a meat safe. It is very dangerous to let little dogs be bitten by mosquitoes, as this pest carries the germ of — dear me — the name is so long I can't remember it; but at all events, it is the 'bug' which gives us the fatal disease known as worms

in the heart. I appreciated the cover. Indeed, I would not sleep without it. One day I heard Amah describing to Missuss how I had sat in a corner with an 'angry face' the night before, refusing to go to bed because she had forgotten it. I said that Amah was severe. So she was to other people, but never severe to me. The fact is, my country-people never bother dogs or children with perpetual orders as to what they are, and are not, to do.

Achay, the downstairs coolie, was one of those rare understanding humans with whom animals can really establish intimate relations; even Kitchener the cold would sit on the edge of the sink purring while Achay washed dishes. He had a large family of children, and as they loved me I often went to play with them in the Village of Peace and Good Fortune which adjoined our house. His little girl Plum Blossom reminded me of Golden Bells. She wore her hair in many tiny red-braided pig-tails which stuck out from all over her head, and Achay liked to paint crimson 'peach-flower' marks on her forehead and cheeks to make her fair skin look fairer still.

The other humans in Wild Goose Happiness House were all considerate and devoted, but hardly need detailed enumeration. Naturally a place was always laid for me when the staff took their meals. I had my own stool and rice-bowl and soon taught Cook my taste in food. It was quite easy — I simply refused to eat what did not please me and he quickly provided me with what did. Amah scolded and said, 'Yo Fei mouth too muchee bad'; nevertheless, I had my mutton roasted, and if there were some dish in old Shantung style, such as



THE VILLAGE OF PEACE AND GOOD FORTUNE

'flakes of rose hibiscus fowl' or 'raven fish eggs,' nobody dreamed of touching it until I was satisfied.

We were very, very happy.

#### THE DRAGONS' DANCE

The garden was a joy to me. I loved to race up and down the lawn, and then rest in the shade of the great camphor tree while Missuss had afternoon tea with a biscuit or two for me thrown in.

We had a good many parties in the garden one way and another, but one especially remains in my mind. It came off early in the Second Moon when the dragon who controls the rain and clouds is supposed to raise his head after his winter sleep. Number One Boy came and asked Missuss whether the dragons, which were to dance in the village that night, might receive their offerings in our garden, and Missuss was delighted that they should do so.

Everybody was busy all the afternoon arranging the best dishes, the silver candlesticks, and bowls all filled with cakes and fruits. They were placed on the flat grass platform which stood near the camphor tree, and after dark the dragons came one by one. Each was formed by a line of about fifty men who carried oblong lanterns mounted on sticks. A long silk covering was stretched over all these lanterns, uniting them in one serpentine body, and that was enveloped by a net casing worked with shining discs. The first man carried a dragon's head all lighted. It had great bulging eyes, and held a round ball in its mouth.

One by one they came, up the drive to the north of the house, through the little east garden out on the wide

south lawn, and there each lovely shining dragon danced to the sound of drums, gongs, and cymbals: danced a slow, sinuous dance which ended at the grass platform where the beneficent saurian bent his head to receive the offering of food. When the first had finished his performance, he moved to the edge of the lawn, while another came, and then another. When each had finished its solo dance, the three moved out together and executed a wonderful trio. They wove in and out, swayed back and forth, long glittering lines of light, kept in measure by the rhythmical beat of gongs and drums. The country-people who had assembled in hundreds urged on the dance; finally one by one the dragons glided away as they had come, going out of the garden by the little gateway to the south.

The next year, when spring 'opened,' Missuss invited the dragons again, but it seems that the men who made up the three different serpents — they came from different villages — had met in a tea-house, and had had a serious dispute: so serious a dispute that the District Magistrate had forbidden a repetition of the ceremony.

So far as we know, the dragons have never danced in the District of New Homes on the Yellow Reach, since that cold dark night of which I speak.

#### THE PEOPLE FLY KITES

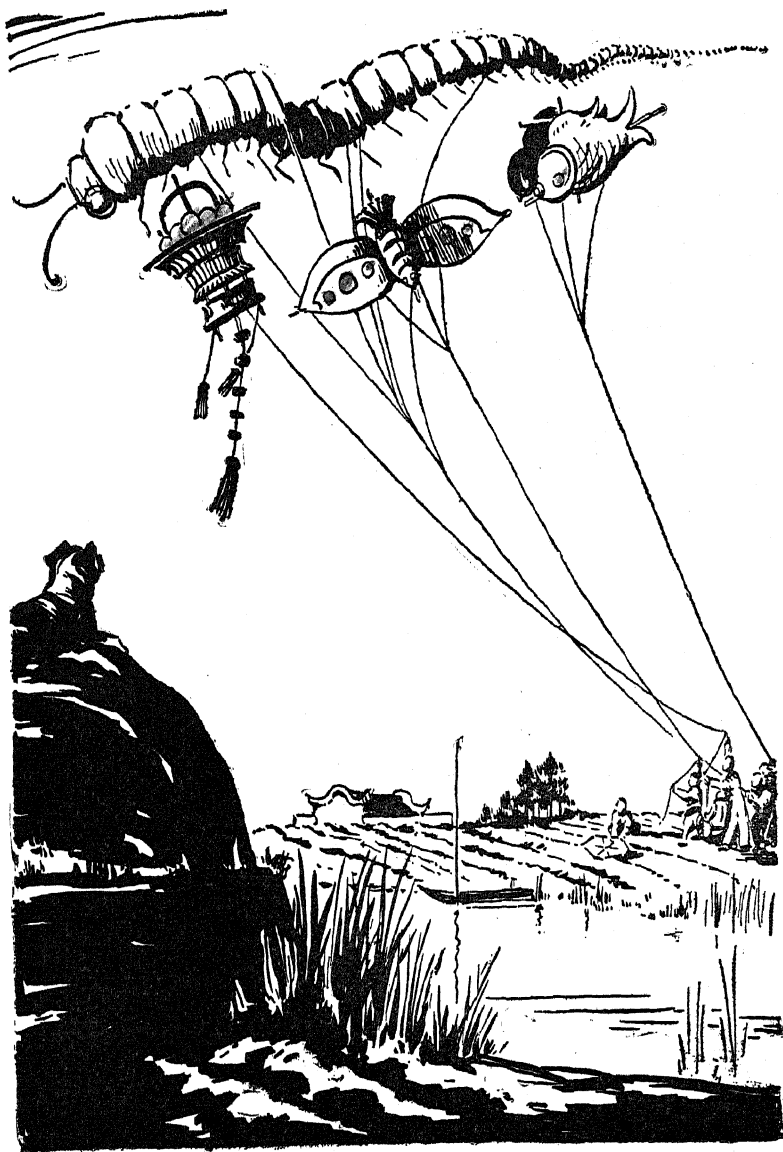
The garden, as I say, was nice, but, oh, the wide fields were nicer still. In China no hedges divide one man's property from that of his neighbours. Only raised paths are used for landmarks. No white boards state, 'Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted'; I could race and race for miles on end.

It was a grand place for my countrymen to indulge in their characteristic sport of flying kites, and when I saw great centipedes waving in the air, or watched flower baskets with their lovely tassels floating above me, all my sporting instincts were aroused. I longed to catch them, and climbed the highest grave mounds available, in what always proved vain attempts.

As the hours of time were dialled in Heaven, the immense plain altered in colour day by day. Soon after the dragon had raised his head, the willows burst their buds and winter wheat painted the fields leek-green. Then came the rape — imperial yellow — standing in vivid patches under the peach trees in bloom, which, to quote a Chinese description, 'presented the appearance of being fire spurted from the mouth, or rosy clouds rising in the air.' Before the pageant of spring had passed, the golden wheat was ripe for cutting, and the fields where it had stood were quickly ploughed and made ready for the cotton-seed. Meanwhile, other fields had grown 'catch crops' of beans, and the moment the little pods were gathered, stalks and leaves were turned into the ground in preparation for the rice.

Throughout the growing season crops were tended, but the farmers, both men and women, avoided the noonday hours of blistering sun, and worked bare-backed in the gloaming of dawn and dusk. At that season the plain showed a heavy, monotonous blue-green, and the eye sought variation in the cloudscapes piled high against the round blue dome of Heaven, which, at the Four Quarters, stretched to a low unbroken horizon.

After 'White Dews' the colors changed again. Har-



WHEN I SAW GREAT CENTIPEDES WAVING IN THE AIR, I LONGED  
TO CATCH THEM AND CLIMBED THE HIGHEST GRAVE MOUNDS  
IN WHAT PROVED VAIN ATTEMPTS



vest with its infinite variety of tone came near, and when the full crops were safely housed, 'gleaning' was allowed. A man appointed for the purpose walked, beating a gong, from east to west, from south to north, along the raised boundary paths, and in his wake followed the poor, the unfortunate who owned no land, and they gathered what they could.

On a plain where every inch is cultivated and where the trees are necessarily few, there can be no flaming phantasy of scarlet and gold such as paints the shores on the Bay of Plentiful Fish, my Canadian home. Oh, no, the autumn colouring of the great plain is much more subtle, but to the seeing eye the gamut is very lovely and ever-changing. The dry cotton stalks provide rich purple patches, a background to the dying grass on the ten thousand grave mounds piled in every direction. This sturdy grass never turns brown in summer. The blazing sun can do its worst, but when autumn comes, it turns red for a brief moment and then fades to a soft brown, transforming the fertile plain into what seems an arid desert relieved by the bamboo groves clustering to the north of every hamlet.

These bamboos are a marvellous shelter from the northeast monsoon, and all the winter work of ginning cotton, plating sandals, carding thread, and repairing tools is carried on outside the houses in the glory of the golden sunlight.

#### I SEE A FUNERAL

My favourite walk — and Missuss took me out every day — lay across the Wu Sung Chiang, or Pine-Tree River of Wu, which foreigners call the 'Soochow Creek.'



CROSSING A NARROW STONE BRIDGE WAS A MOST GORGEOUS  
'DRAGON CHARIOT'

Cotton-mills, silk-mills, factories of all sorts line its sides; and there are 'ten thousand' boats pressed between its banks. These boats are loaded with every imaginable cargo from bales of cotton-seed to piles of pottery jars — jars of peacock blue and soft pellucid green glistening in the sunshine. They are the homes, too, of many thousand people, who are born, live, and die between their decks. So as we ferried across the Wu Sung River, we saw Chinese life at every stage; here an infant tethered to the gunwale, there a coffin awaiting burial.

On the other side of the river we always landed at a police station. This was purely 'modern style.' Old China didn't bother with policemen and such-like things: the village elders settled difficulties. I must say that the part of modern policeman or soldier does not fit my country-people very well; they appear much more at home as farmers and workmen — creating, not destroying. After all, soldiers are not so fashionable as they were, even in the West; and it seems a pity the Chinese should try to make popular things that other people have tried out and found inconvenient.

To return to the police — the station where we landed was in charge of a very handsome Chief. When on duty he looked imposing with many shining buttons, but I liked him best when he was at ease, because then he looked natural in a long silk coat, and seemed happy airing his bird.

One autumn afternoon we crossed the creek and reached the fields behind the police station to see a wonderful sight. There, crossing a narrow stone bridge,



THERE ARE 'TEN THOUSAND' BOATS PRESSED BETWEEN ITS BANKS

was a most gorgeous 'Dragon Chariot.' The bearers were pushing, pulling, balancing, and supporting it, so that it should not capsize into the creek below and disturb the corpse which was taking its last journey under the wonderful embroidered pall. Flowers of happiness ran riot on a scarlet ground; shining discs acted as little mirrors to ward off evil influences; scarves of green, magenta, yellow, and scarlet were suspended across the coffin. On top stood the model of that bridge which every soul is supposed to cross when it enters the World of Shade; from above the bridge fluttered a tiny Republican flag in its stripes of five colours, and from either end of the chariot protruded the dragon's head and tail.

Accompanying the 'dragon chariot,' which took the place of the black hearse used in America, was a wonderful procession. It stretched so far in front and behind the chariot that the line of wheelbarrows carrying mourners, all dressed in snowy white, looked like a silver serpent undulating across the fields.

Missuss asked if she might take some photographs. The people in charge were delighted, and begged that she would make a picture of the wonderful things carried in front. She did her best. We ran across the fields as hard as ever we could. Indeed, I heard a mourner exclaim, as Missuss passed him, jumping from furrow to furrow, 'She *can* gallop.' But it was no use; we never did catch up with the head of the procession, so never knew what was really there. We heard, though, that the people of the village the dead man hailed from had sent a number of children dressed in magnificent historical costumes, who, placed in iron frames, stood high above

the crowd on the shoulders of their bearers: a most imposing spectacle.

The chief mourner wore sackcloth robes and walked behind a screen made of white cloth. A red official umbrella, such as people used in monarchical days, was carried behind him. Republicanism does not seem to be popular in connection with 'white affairs,' a name people apply to funerals.

It turned out that the dead man had come from a market-town northwest of Shanghai; that he had left there to seek his fortune when but a youth; that he had found the fortune, and had passed his days in the busy city. Now his soul had descended to the Yellow Springs and it was right and proper that his body should lie in the family burial-ground near his 'original earth.'

The Master of Ceremonies invited us to attend the funeral rites at the house of the Clan. As these rites spread over a considerable time, it was not until a day or two later that Missuss and I set out, accompanied by Amah and her little niece, to find the market-town where the deceased had lived.

The motor-car took us to the ferry, but once on the other side of the Pine-Tree River, their golden-lily feet obliged Amah and her niece to sit upon a 'small carriage.' Foreigners call these vehicles 'wheelbarrows,' but that does not seem to me a good name. They are not in the least like Western wheelbarrows. The actual form varies slightly in different parts of China, but there is always a single wheel placed between two seats made of wooden bars. The passengers, sometimes as many as nine, sit back to back on these seats, and the man who 'pushes forward a small carriage' — to use the technical

term — stands between shafts behind the seats, and assists himself in the difficult task of keeping a balance by means of a strap across his shoulders. Such men are of a different social status from the unfortunate individuals who run gasping between the shafts of a jinrickshaw. They are self-respecting persons who own their 'small carriages,' and bequeath their trade to a son, a nephew, or some member of the family. One must be very skilful to 'push forward a small carriage,' as the loads are so often unbalanced; and then the man himself must adjust the weight.

Once Miss Douglass was travelling in the far interior and wished to catch a train. No vehicle was available, nor could she explain her needs in a strange language. Finally, as despair was descending upon her, a man pushing his 'small carriage' loomed into view; one seat was already occupied by a pig strapped to the bars, but she gratefully accepted the other. The pig squealed, the wheel creaked, as 'small carriage' wheels invariably do; the assembled crowd shouted with joy; but Miss Douglass made the train!

Missuss and I were glad that Amah and her niece had to ride, as the man, being of a loquacious nature, we learned much about the deceased, his wealth and his virtues, while the barred vehicle bumped along over the large flat paving-stones. Amah and her niece kept their balance wonderfully, and did not need the long rope stirrups hanging ready for use at the edge of the seats.

There was no difficulty in finding the house of the Wang Clan. The whole life of the little town was focussed there that day. My country-people never keep



AMAH AND HER NIECE SAT UPON A 'SMALL CARRIAGE'



their celebrations to themselves; they expect passers-by to share in the excitement.

Inside the Great Gate stood a carved and gilded spirit screen, and on a table which ran entirely across the Guest Hall was laid a lovely cover of pale-blue satin embroidered in rose-coloured flowers. It shone softly from under the gilded wooden screens, flaming scarlet candles, golden gongs, little trumpets and dark red 'wooden fish' placed in readiness for the intermittent services, which were carried on by a number of yellow-robed, black-capped Taoist priests. From the ceiling hung lanterns with long bright tassels, and embroidered temple hangings in an infinite variety of colours.

The little east room was dedicated to the table of offerings laid before the spirit portrait of the dead man. In olden days the portrait would have been a painting on silk made directly after death and before *rigor mortis* had set in, but nowadays, as in this case, the painting is often replaced by an enlarged photograph.

A handsome pewter altar-set stood on the table; the incense-burner in the centre was flanked by candlesticks holding lighted candles and by flower vases filled with chrysanthemums. There were also a number of dishes filled with fruits, cakes, and various foods, and, crowning all, a bottle of 'Old Tawny Port.'

The picture was draped in silk scarves, and beside it stood beautifully made paper figurines of a youth and a maid. The youth carried his master's pipe, while the maid held a tea-cup, and they both looked ready to step immediately into the World of Shade and carry on their duties in a most efficient manner.

The little east room being thus fully occupied with

arrangements for the comfort of the dead, guests were received in the room to the west of the entrance; and there the son of the dead man welcomed us and thanked us for coming to his 'thatched hovel.'

It seemed, as we sat there, that every man, woman, and child who lived in that market-town must, at one time or another, have slipped through the entrance gate into the high, narrow Heaven's Well — to use the Chinese name for a courtyard open to the sky. They were all loud in their praises of the beautiful arrangements. At intervals the priests beat the 'wooden fish,' struck the gongs, and recited parts of the sacred books. It made a stirring scene, vibrating with colour and throbbing with movement.

Another picture, the very antithesis of this, flashed before our eyes. Turning, we looked through a doorway into an inner room which was flooded with light from the slanting rays of the setting sun, and there sat, quite alone, an old serving-woman. Her blue cotton apron was patched and faded, her face wrinkled and worn, but a perfect peace enveloped her. People might come and go, priests might murmur prayers and beat gongs, but, bathed in sunshine, she slept the dreamless sleep of exhaustion and old age.

#### A CELESTIAL DOG EATS THE MOON

In the autumn of that year Missuss was ill — she lay in bed for weeks, and I was greatly troubled. Strange women with white kerchiefs on their heads hovered about her; one of them actually wanted to turn me and my basket out of the room! When she suggested it, however, Missuss tried to sit up in bed; her face grew

very pink, her eyes shone very brightly, and her voice sounded different in some way. At all events, a red-headed man who happened to be there — he came several times a day — said quickly, 'No matter, no matter, the dog had better stay.' So I stayed, dull as it was lying under Missuss's bed hour after hour, day after day, week after week. The woman with the white head-dress murmured something about the folly of 'having a dog in the room of a typhoid patient,' but nothing further happened.

Amah, too, was very troubled, but she felt better after she had made an enquiry by means of tally-sticks in the little temple where the Empress of Heaven sits. The response, written on yellow paper, assured her that Missuss would recover. And recover she slowly did; but to her extreme annoyance she was not well enough to take part in the ceremonies held during an eclipse of the moon. There is a legend among my people that at certain intervals the Celestial Dog swallows the Moon, and that, in order to make him disgorge it, a great noise and fuss must be made.

The eclipse occurred on a still night, when the world shone in a pattern of silver, relieved by indigo shadows. As Amah and I peered from the third-story verandah over the tree-tops towards the Village of Peace and Good Fortune, we could see flaming candles, clouds of incense smoke, and many people hurrying to and fro.

Presently a little shadow crept over the Moon. The Hound of Heaven had commenced his meal; and instantly the people in the village began to beat their gongs, clash their cymbals, and set off their firecrackers. As the shadow became deeper and deeper, the noise

became louder and louder. Veritable pandemonium reigned, sufficient to strike terror to the heart of any dog, be he of heaven or of earth. Amah, who reported progress at intervals to Missuss, was, I think, greatly relieved when the thin bright edge of the Moon began to reappear. The planet was saved, and before very long shone with its accustomed brilliance over an earth grown quiet and still.

This same Celestial Dog is supposed to haunt a house where a birth takes place, as, according to popular belief, it loves to vary its diet of sun or moon by devouring newborn babies! Myself, I can't believe that any member of my race could do such a thing, but, be that as it may, ignorant people are apt to shoot arrows made of peach wood into the air as a protection for the baby who is coming into the world.

Nor do precautions cease after a child is born. The poor little thing must pass thirty dangerous 'barriers' before it reaches the age of sixteen, and nine of these barriers lie across its path during the first one hundred days of life! When these nine have been successfully left behind, the little child is at least beyond danger of being caught by the 'Seize Life Spirits' — spirits of girls, who, having died before marriage, stand no chance whatever of being reborn as men; spirits who would be only too thankful to seize the soul of a little boy for their own use. Rich people who can afford attendants never let their children go out-of-doors until the ninth barrier is passed. Poor people, who cannot pursue such a course, must depend on amulets and charms of every sort and kind to protect their precious babies.

Ancient coins, especially those of the T'ang and Sung

Dynasties, are efficacious, and many children wear one or more suspended from their necks by a red cord. Achay's babies all had them. Metal plaques, too, are very popular, and are made in a diversity of forms, all designed to 'ward off evil influences.' Would-be mothers sometimes make temple vows, promising that, if a child be granted them, they will dress it in the robe of a priest until it reaches a certain age. And it is no uncommon sight to see a grubby-nosed little urchin playing in the gutter, his sole garment a tiny monk's habit.

Perhaps the most interesting charm of all, and one which naturally appeals deeply to me, is the silver 'dog collar' often sent to newborn baby boys by a family friend. In sending it, the friend says, by means of the symbol: 'May your little child be as easy to bring up and to nourish as are the little dogs.'

It is true that puppies are hardly ever ill; they always have a good appetite; and they but rarely die!

#### AT A TEMPLE IN THE HILLS

There is no manner of doubt that we members of the canine race are progressive. We love to go — go anywhere; we love movement for its own sake. Just consider how dogs have adopted motoring. Personally, I always sit very straight and still on the front seat. No one would dream of suggesting that I sit anywhere else, but I have noticed other dogs hanging over the side of motor-cars, their tongues out, their eyes bulging with eagerness. I have heard, too, that certain members of the race are enthusiastic about aviation; this method of progression I have had no opportunity of testing. Missuss says she would like to try it, and doubtless if

she does I shall accompany her, but so far my Uncle Peter has successfully headed her off from any such experiment. Being thus of an impetuous, energetic, open-minded nature, it is easy to imagine how greatly I enjoyed the journeys in house-boats which we often made while in China.

These journeys took us frequently to hills, and then I almost went out of my mind with joy. I could never forget the hills at the Outpost of Defence by the Awe-Inspiring Sea, and the plains which lie by the Yellow Reach always struck me as lacking in variety. Run there as I would, I could use only one set of muscles.

Hills in China are even more varied than hills in other places I have seen, because, added to their natural variety of terrain flora and fauna, common to all high places, they provide villages with all the accompanying novel smells, so dear to the nose of a dog; and also temples of every size and kind.

My countrymen choose the most beautiful and inaccessible spots when they build these houses designed for the enjoyment of peace and meditation. Long flights of steps lead to them, and at the top of the steps arbours are often placed; arbours where tempered sunlight drips between bamboo slats, purple wistaria blooms, or jade-green leaves. Here weary pilgrims halt, and, sitting before the Hall where Virtuous Worthies Assemble, or some other little booth with an equally appropriate name, they sip tea and eat a modicum of food, thus refreshing their bodies before they penetrate to the inner sanctuary and seek refreshment for the spirit.

If the temple be a properly equipped Buddhist shrine, the first building will contain effigies of the Four Heav-

only Kings, who are supposed to stand guard against all evil influences at the four quarters of the universe. In another incarnation they were four giant brothers, who, slain in supernatural battle, were subsequently appointed to these important offices. The eldest was directed to produce, with his magic sword, the wind; while his younger brother, who holds a stringed instrument, was charged with the duty of attuning and controlling the blast. To the third brother, who is provided with an immense umbrella, belongs the responsibility of bringing forth rain, which the fourth must distribute evenly. By a play on words too complicated for me to explain, the four brothers suggest to the minds of 'incense guests' a phrase constantly on the lips of an agricultural people. 'Wind controlled and rain in correct quantity.'

It is not to be supposed, however, that these Kings are looked upon as Divine beings; in fact, Missuss once had a most interesting conversation in pidgin English with Canton Carpenter, to whom she showed a photograph of the second brother. She said, 'This b'long what thing *joss*?'—using the pidgin English term for 'a god.'

He replied with deepest scorn, 'That no b'long *joss*.'

'No b'long *joss*?' Missuss asked in surprise. 'Suppose this no b'long *joss*, *joss* b'long what thing?'

Canton Carpenter looked very grave, and then said earnestly: '*Joss* b'long what thing? My talkee you. Sometime have got one number one man. He long time no die. Bime-bye that Heaven-Head-Man sendee one chit talkee he come; sendee one heaven bird catchee he. He sit down, go topside.' Canton Carpenter waved his arms towards the clouds, and Missuss seemed to see the



ARBOURS WHERE TEMPERED SUNLIGHT DRIPS BETWEEN BAMBOO SLATS  
AND PURPLE WISTARIA BLOOMS OR JADE-GREEN LEAVES



heaven bird with its precious burden, winging its flight towards the sky. He paused a moment, and then concluded his discourse: 'Any man talkee he b'long number one man, makee he wood pattern, puttee inside *joss-house*.'

The word *joss*, used throughout his conversation, is a corruption of the Portuguese word *dios*, 'god'; the word *chit* means a 'letter,' and was probably imported from India by the early traders who brought with them a number of terms in local use there; while the last sentence reads in everyday English: 'Everybody said that he was a most excellent person, so they made his wooden figure and placed it in a temple.'

Missuss found the conversation most illuminating; it showed clearly that my country-people regard the figures in their shrines much as people of the West regard the figures of saints. There is never any representation in China of the Creator, whom my people call 'Shang Ti, Above Lord.' The figures in temples are commonly referred to as *p'u sa*, a transliteration of the Sanskrit word *bodhisattwa*, meaning 'an inferior Buddha.'

Furthermore, Canton Carpenter spoke very good pidgin English, and Missuss considers that manner of speech, which is often scoffed at and referred to as gibberish, interesting, useful, and enlightening. In fact, she thinks that a thorough knowledge of pidgin English is very helpful in a study of China. The sensible Eastern method of first stating clearly the matter to be discussed, and the terseness of Chinese, are always conformed to. Missuss spoke pidgin English with her staff and feels that what knowledge she may have gained of everyday China and its thought comes largely from her

long use of this medium. She says that it is one thing to learn a foreign language and to express one's self in the words of another people, but quite another to use an Eastern framework and fill in the pattern with Western words, as well as hybrid words coined in the mint of international trade. She says, too, that it is no small achievement to make one's meaning crystal-clear, and that she knows many misunderstandings arise because people do not stop to think.

We were walking through his racing-stables one day with a great friend of Missuss's, a gentleman who has lived in China for many years. We heard the following conversation between him and his *mafoo* or groom:

'That pony have ridee?'

'Have ridee.'

'What time have ridee?'

'Just now wantchee ridee.' (Wantchee is used for I will.)

Then the gentleman turned to Missuss and exploded: 'You see how hopeless it is! I really believe all Chinese are liars. I asked him if he had ridden the ponies; he said that he had done so — but he hasn't!'

'Well,' said Missuss, in her disgusted voice, the voice she uses when I come in from digging crabs on the creek-bank at low tide, 'you really *are* unreasonable. The *mafoo* hadn't the smallest idea that you were asking a question. You know the Chinese don't conjugate verbs, so he didn't realize that you used the past tense; nor did the rising inflection mean anything to him. He thinks of that as a mere variation of tone. You have lived here for thirty years, at least, and you should know by this time that when the Chinese ask a question they either

use the vocal interrogation point *ma* at the end of the sentence, or they state an alternative. In pidgin English, of course, you *must* state an alternative. If you had said, "That pony have ridee? no have ridee?" the *mafoo* would have known that you were asking whether he had done it or not, and would have told you the truth — there would have been no difficulty about it. As it is, he thinks you are giving an order, which he intends to carry out at once.'

As pidgin English sprang from the needs of trade and barter, naturally its terms are largely commercial. Mr. Hayning once told a Chinese merchant that a mutual friend of theirs was engaged to be married. The merchant gravely acquiesced, saying: 'My savee. Have putee book, no have catchee cargo.' (Which means, 'I know' — *savee* comes from the Spanish *sabe*. 'The contract has been entered in the books, but the goods have not yet been delivered.')

I must again 'build another stove,' as I have wandered far from the shady temple steps where I sat waiting for Missuss. I could see her below me asking a direction from a blue-coated peasant. He, as is the custom of 'uninstructed people' in China, was pointing out the way with his pursed-up lips, his hands clasped behind his back. Following the direction he had indicated, we reached a village, so exactly like the one described by the poet Wang Wei, thirteen centuries ago, that Missuss could not resist quoting the poem, which she had translated, and which her friend Miss Lowell had rendered into English.

The slanting sun shines on the cluster of small houses upon the heights;

Oxen and sheep are coming home along the distant lane.  
An old countryman is thinking of the herd-boy,  
He leans on his staff by the thorn-branch gate, watching.  
Pheasants are calling, the wheat is coming into ear,  
Silkworms sleep, the mulberry-leaves are thin.  
Labourers, with their hoes over their shoulders, arrive;  
They speak pleasantly together, loath to part.

We, too, heard pheasants calling, and often saw the glint of their bright feathers and heard the strong whirr of their wings. In fact, when we went up-country, we saw many, many birds, and we often met bird-catchers with their long poles and sticky lime, who were trying to trap song-birds and flycatchers to supply the bird markets so numerous in China.

My countrymen have a perfect passion for birds; not birds that they shoot, but birds they keep as pets in the most beautiful cages they can afford to buy. Miss Douglass said that one day on the Great Horse Road, which runs through the centre of the City-Above-the-Sea, she was standing in front of a bank when a magnificent limousine drove up. It was plentifully supplied with the mirrors my compatriots use in cars; not from motives of vanity, but because they afford protection from evil influences and avert accidents. I never can understand why mirrors are not adopted on this continent where motor crashes are so plentiful. The modern vehicle of which I speak was well supplied with this bright protection. From it stepped a Chinese gentleman, doubtless one of the bank directors. He was exquisitely dressed. His long, straw-coloured, fur-lined robe of satin brocade was half-hidden by a short coat, deep crimson in colour, and enriched by designs of cut velvet. His close black

cap was surmounted by a coral button, quite in the old style. His hands, too, were old style, as he wore the finger-nails of a scholar, so long that silver casings were necessary; and suspended from one finger there dangled — a minute bird-cage: a bird-cage of ivory so exquisitely carved that it might have come from the Empress Mother's palace in the western heavens, and behind the frail bars there sat, pressed close together, two tiny love birds.

Not only the rich, however, treasure birds; the poorest individual who labours with the bitterness of his strength indulges, if he can possibly do so, in a feathered friend kept in a bamboo cage. Larks from the north are very popular, and so are bulbuls with their enchanting black caps. Various flycatchers, too, are an especial joy to my country-people. The dainty creatures sit tethered to their perches by a long string, and make abrupt flights out into the air in order to catch the tiny seeds tossed up by their master. But of all the pet birds none is so coveted or so cared for as is the *hua mei*, the 'painted eyebrows.' His classical name is *Turdus sinensis*, but who cares for exact nomenclature when they may hear the sweet song of 'painted eyebrows'?

One bird will pit his skill in song against a rival, if that rival be unseen. To attain this end, their masters wrap a square of thick blue cotton cloth around the cages, and then the duo begins. Bright sounds clash and splinter in the air: it is a veritable tourney of tone; and when the tourney is done, when the hour of yellow dusk deepens momentarily, then master and bird are apt to rest, as Missuss and I have often seen them do, by the shores of some still canal. The master sits, as my country-people



THE MASTER SITS QUITE COMFORTABLY ON NOTHING AT ALL

are able to do, quite comfortably on nothing at all; the bird, uncovered now, twitters his orison, and possibly the reflection of a far-off pagoda shivers and breaks on the skin of the water.

#### ADVENTURES DAY BY DAY

One Sunday, during the quiet after-tiffin hour which should be undisturbed, I was dozing in my downstairs basket. Missuss came into the room and, crossing to the corner bookcase, climbed a little pair of steps in order to reach the top shelf. As I watched her, I saw a dark flash fly across the corner in the air. Missuss made a strange sound, came down the steps very quickly, and hurried out of the room. She soon returned with Number One Boy, and a great friend of mine who was staying with us. Amah called him 'Mr. Hayning.' Missuss explained to them, rather breathlessly, that a rat was in the bookcase, and then she went out and closed the large folding doors.

Such a performance as followed! Mr. Hayning and the Boy chased that unfortunate rat until they had killed it; the odds seemed a trifle unfair, but they both seemed quite pleased with their prowess. I heard Mr. Hayning talking with Missuss about it later, and she looked at me in a puzzled way, but said nothing.

That evening, however, when Amah was brushing her hair (I was then lying in my upstairs basket), I heard her say, 'Amah, Mr. Hayning think so Yo Fei no b'long clever dog. Today you savee have got one piece rat. This side run, run — that side run, run — Yo Fei sit down basket no look-see — anything no talkee. Mr. Hayning think so Yo Fei b'long to much stupid.'

Amah straightened up, and pulled the strand of long brown hair she was brushing (I saw Missuss wince), and exclaimed like a flash, 'Yo Fei no b'long poussie — how fashion? Missuss no talkee Mr. Hayning, Yo Fei never do rat pidgin?'

Amah, who understood me so well, liked to have me go everywhere with her, so one morning, when Missuss, who was busy, suggested that she go into the Chinese city to buy some tassels which were needed for the hanging lamps, and that she then proceed to the Third Horse Road to buy purple raw silk because 'Yo Fei basket have spilam,' Amah said at once, 'More better Yo Fei long my go.'

The red motor-car took us to the city entrance, but in spite of her golden-lily feet Amah had to walk after that; no motor-car could make its way through city traffic jammed, as it is, into streets eight or nine feet wide. I knew the city very well, as Missuss often took me there, and the crowd and bustle did not confuse me as it might have done some members of my race. In fact, the sights, sounds, and smells — which I have heard humans object to — were most alluring to me.

Representatives of every type of my countrymen are met in those glittering patterned streets where colour runs riot. Rich men hurtle along in sedan chairs. Their bearers, in order to clear the road, utter loud cries of warning, cries which custom demands shall be instantly obeyed; not because the passengers may be wealthy and powerful, but because the chair-bearers would suffer were their swinging stride interrupted and their harmonious coöperation interfered with. Beggars, members



of an organized fraternity in my country, ply their trade to right and left, but carefully avoid certain shops, which, recognizing their existence, pay a monthly sum to the Chief of the Beggars' Guild.

Such shops display a sign, often made in the shape of the beggar's gourd, on which the words 'great joy, benefit to trade,' are written; seeing such a sign, none of the 'desire rice' brotherhood dreams of intruding. Failing the sign, however, shops are liable to visits at all hours from beggars, who, added to their already terrible appearance, beat their gongs, and reiterate their plaintive cry, '*Ta-ma-ma! Ta-ma-ma! Ta-ma-ma!*' with a persistence worthy of a better cause. Beggars in the West, I believe, proceed on a more individual basis and keep their takings which my country-people pool — harmonious coöperation again! It is the keystone of our arch in China.

Water-carriers; vendors with their stalls; men hired carefully to accumulate all paper bearing the written character and then burn it reverently in a special furnace provided for the purpose; idlers on their way to tea-shops; and men who are going earnestly about their business — all these rub shoulders in the narrow streets.

Shops, too, of seemingly every sort and kind line the paths on either side. As the fronts are made of high, moveable wooden shutters, taken down each morning, wares are temptingly displayed by the roadside, and people are not obliged to peer through a barrier of glass. Very fine shops have porcelain plaques inserted in their blackwood counters; others, especially those where medicines are sold, are most elaborately carved and gilded. Missuss was especially attached to the coffin



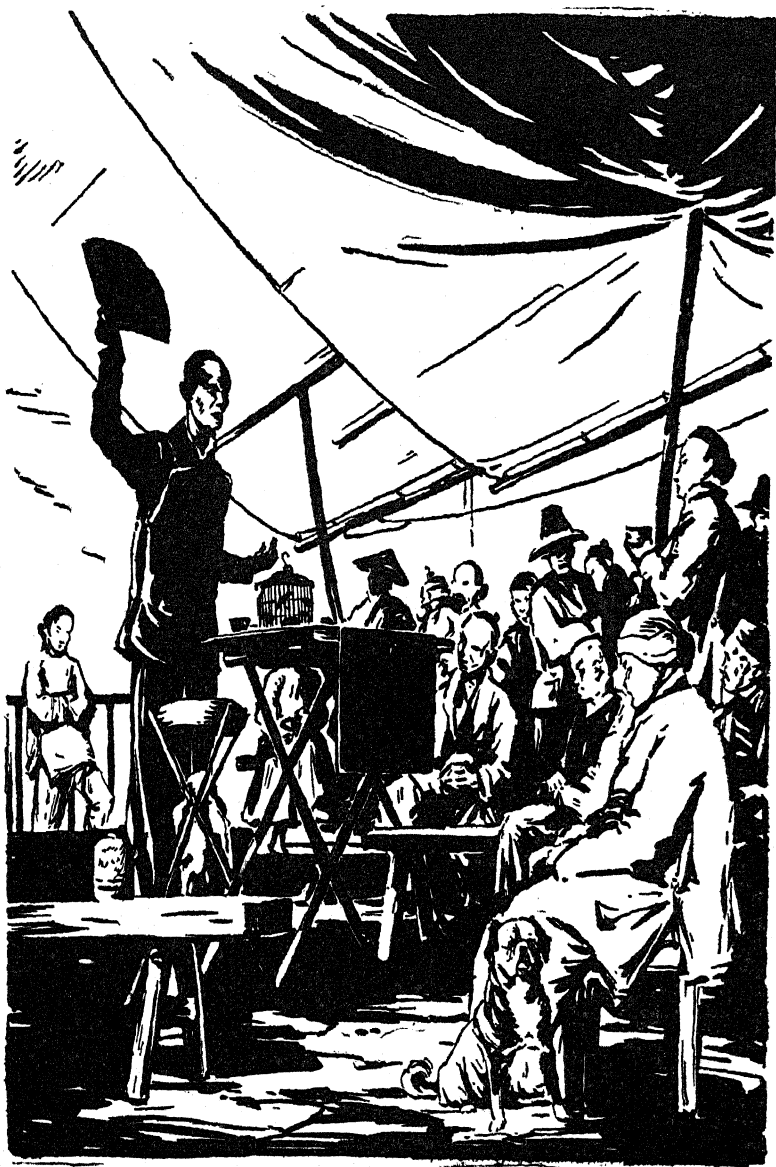
I, TOO, HURRIED ACROSS AND SAT AN EXPECTANT SIT

shop, where filial sons select beautiful black lacquered catafalques which their parents may admire for years before they use them. She found the grave-clothes very interesting, and the soul-banners, as well as the spirit-tablets, which are only plain strips of wood until the touch of a scholar's writing-brush transforms them into the very seat of the soul.

The most conspicuous objects about Chinese shops, however, are the signs. It is considered very important that the name chosen be a combination of lucky characters, such as *fu li*, 'happiness and profit'; *hung fa*, 'a flood of output'; and a hundred others. These characters are written on signboards of various shapes and are hung in pairs well out into the street, one at either extremity of the shop.

Some signs bear pictures of scissors, hats, and so on, as well as words, and a wealth of gold leaf and colour is expended upon their decoration. Individualism is at such a discount in my country that the shop-keeper's name is always of secondary importance. In the old days one never saw a sign, such as 'John Smith, Grocer'; but nowadays some of my compatriots use Western methods. For instance, at the Outpost of Defence by the Awe-Inspiring Sea, where British ships of war spend the summer, and where the blue-jackets order many clothes, a local tailor has written both his Chinese and his English style upon the same board. The first reads: 'Ho Lin — Harmonious Concord in the Luxuriant Forest'; the second: 'Jelly Belly, Naval Tailor.'

Nor are all the shop signs written on stiff wooden boards. Some of my countrymen prefer cloth banners, red, yellow, or green, which they stretch across the



ON A BENCH BY HIS SIDE STOOD HIS TEAPOT IN ITS  
STRAW-COVERED, CLOTH-LINED CASE

street, and which flutter gaily in the breeze, breaking up the light in a marvellous manner. Nor is all the fluttering provided by banners. Far from it. Careful housewives suspend their laundry on bamboo poles jutting from upper windows, so spatch-cocked trousers and well-hung coats are no uncommon sight.

Missuss always liked the tassel shop, at the sign of 'Steadfast and Effulgent Prosperity.' Tassels of every imaginable size and colour, from huge fat tassels for wedding-beds to tiny frail tassels for carved bird-cages, hung there in serried ranks; and at the back of the shop under a skylight, where sunshine poured down, the workman sat and spun the pale gold filaments into threads.

Amah and I executed our commission, and were then conscious of a most appetizing smell. Turning, we realized that a food-stall stood directly across the street. *Hai-ya*, what an accumulation of dainties! Amah, remembering that we expected to have a feast on the bright morrow, hurried across to buy some little luxury. I, too, hurried across, and sat an expectant sit, but for some unexplained reason Amah paid not the slightest attention to me. After a discussion in regard to price, she purchased a packet of golden carp and then we hurried on.

My annoyance was increased, not lessened, by the next proceeding. Attracted by the tapping of a storyteller's drum, Amah turned into the market-place just beyond the bird-stalls, and there found what she was seeking — a story-teller in full swing. Fan in air, he was, with marvellous skill, impersonating a beautiful heroine, and on a bench by his side stood his tea-pot

in its straw-covered cloth-lined case. For many centuries my countrymen have used such cases, probably the prototype of Western thermos bottles. Amah sank contentedly into a seat at the edge of the crowd and prepared to listen with all her ears. As for me, I put on my angry face and turned my back to them all!

Story-tellers, geomancers, and letter-writers are among the most interesting sights in any Chinese city. From the first, the 'uninstructed people' learn much of their country's history, legend, and literature; from the second they obtain replies to many questions concerning their destiny; and by means of letter-writers they communicate with far-off friends. The manner in which my countrymen address their envelopes always seems very practical to me. They first inscribe in large characters the name of the city the letter is destined to reach, then come the name of ward, or alleyway, the house number, and last of all the name of the addressee.

When Amah had heard enough about the sorrows and joys of Yang Kuei-fei, she led me back to the motor-car. We drove in silence to the Third Horse Road. Amah was evidently still living in a world of pavilions, marble pathways, and flowery blossoms. She left me in the car when we reached the silk shop. She also left the golden carp.

I ate it every scrap.

#### AT THE GRASS HUT ON THE YELLOW REACH

In the course of time we left Wild Goose Happiness House, and went to live in the Grass Hut which Missuss had built in a corner of the garden, beyond the big camphor tree.

We had quite an amusing time while it was being made, but I cannot say that I liked it very much when it was finished. There was no garden to speak of, just a series of courtyards alternating with buildings. I always seemed to be in the wrong enclosure and grew weary of scratching doors. Amah was very sympathetic about my inability to pass freely from one place to another, and said, 'How fashion can open door? No got hand.'

There was, however, one advantage, and my varied life has accustomed me to 'following the square and complying with the round.' The Great Gate opened directly on the road, so I could sit on our own doorsill and watch the passers-by.

I wonder if anywhere else in the world one can see the same medley of people as throng the streets in the City-Above-the-Sea on the Yellow Reach? Or whether, anywhere else, age-old customs rub shoulders with modern ideas as they do there?

The pageant of one day remains an especially vivid memory. Early in the morning an old-style funeral procession passed. The mourners in white provided a wonderful foil to the scarlet official umbrellas, the deep blue banners, and the priests in yellow and rose.

I had not even time to return to my basket before another procession appeared — my country-people thoroughly enjoy peregrinations, but this one was of a very different nature. The long, long line of marchers were all school-children, and there were as many little girls as little boys. The girls wore Chinese dress, and the majority of them had chosen grey *ai kuo pu*, or 'love-country cotton-cloth'; but the boys wore a strange Western garb, the uniform of 'Scouts.' The long line

was headed by the flag of the Republic; and its five stripes broke, shivered, and interlaced, as the flag fluttered in the breeze. The colour red stands for China proper, or the Eighteen Provinces, and is at the top of the standard; yellow for Manchuria comes next; then blue for Mongolia; white for Sin Kiang; and finally black for Tibet.

The Republic may be but loosely knit; and the masses who compose it can have but a faint idea of what a 'people-ruled country' means; nevertheless, bonds, hallowed by time, still exist between the different Provinces. The five-coloured flag flies over a vast stretch of the earth's surface, a stretch so vast that within its borders Great Britain and Europe, from Novaya Zemlya to Crete, from the Ural Mountains to Cape St. Vincent, could fit so easily that eight hundred thousand to nine hundred thousand square miles would be left unoccupied. Yet people say a 'strong man is what China needs'!

A national flag is for my country a very modern thing. It was never needed in the days before Western intercourse. Flags there were in plenty, beautiful flags — triangular, oblong; narrow and wide; small, and so large that, while the tops were fastened to a high flag-staff, the rippling tips brushed the ground. But why should a Son of Heaven need a national standard? From his seclusion behind the rose-red walls of the 'Purple Forbidden Enclosure' he ruled 'All-Below-the-Sky'; he was father and mother of the people; and all men within the four seas which bounded a square world 'were brothers' — at least, so my country-people believed. Not until 1863 was the imperial dragon on a yellow



triangle added to the national flags of the civilized world, and with the Empire the dragon fell, his place being taken by the flag, of which I have spoken, on which the five colours of happiness are blended. Since the day on which I saw that procession, the flag has been changed again. Now, instead of the five stripes of the Chinese Republic is a rising sun on a blue ground.

To return to the children and their procession: as they marched, they sang the ancient song which Young China has adopted as its 'National Anthem.' Missuss has made a translation:

### CLOUDS OF GOOD AUGURY

#### NATIONAL SONG

Clouds of good augury burn with glory,  
Rising slowly they cross, recross, shimmering films of light.  
Sun and Moon shine in brilliant splendour;  
And evermore shall dawn succeed to dawn.

I do not know why the children were passing our door, but the procession was a manifestation of that nationwide effort which is being made to cultivate, in the Central Flowery State, fiery patriotism on the Occidental model.

Yet I believe it was a woman of the West who said, 'Patriotism is not enough'! And He whom the West considers its Teacher certainly taught, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

#### I SEE A WEDDING

In the afternoon, during that selfsame day, at the hour when golden shadows are awry, the third proces-

sion, heralded by much music and beating of gongs, filed past the house. This time a bride had gone out from the door of her family home, and was on her way to the final ceremony which would celebrate her entry into a new clan.

I say 'final,' because, if the folk-tale is to be believed, an old man who lives in the moon, and whose white beard has turned yellow with age, knots together the threads of affinity. Green threads and red threads, red threads and green threads, are knotted long before either bride or groom sees the light of day. Every child in China has heard the antithetical phrases:

Marriage affinity is settled in a former life;  
Through five hundred ages the Knot comes down.

My reader may wonder how this affinity is recognized — thus showing that he does not realize the long, careful, and complicated negotiations which precede marriage in my country. To begin with, a go-between is consulted, and she — as the go-between is generally a woman — first discovers whether any inhibition exists between the animals which govern the horoscopes of the young people in question.

Everybody in China passes his life under the influence and protection of whichever animal governs the year of his birth. These animals, pertaining to the famous Twelve Branches, are the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and pig. Now, the rat hates the sheep; the ox cannot endure the horse; the tiger and the serpent are antipathetic; while the hare, weak as it is by nature, loathes the dragon; the pig and the monkey cannot agree; and individuals of my

race find the conceit and aggression of the cock unendurable.

It seems to me very sensible to abandon a venture that is foredoomed to failure, and that is what happens if the go-between finds that affinity cannot exist between the youth and the maid. If all is well, however, they forthwith proceed to arrange the Three Covenants and Six Ceremonies which will unite the couple. Betrothal is very binding; marriage contracts are exchanged, and the groom sends 'earnest money' with which the trousseau is bought. He also sends gifts in kind: hair ornaments of gold or silver washed with gold, earrings, bracelets, and jewel jade if his purse permits. The bride, too, sends gifts when her marriage contract goes to the groom in exchange for his. It is considered very important for her self-respect that the trousseau and presents be as valuable as the bridegroom can afford.

For a long time Missuss was on the committee of an orphanage for Chinese girls whose marriages were carefully arranged. The rule there was that the prospective groom should provide a gold ring, gold earrings, gold-washed bracelets, and a breast-pin, and that he should pay sixty dollars; with the money the girl bought herself suitable clothing and provided sheeting, mattresses, and two wadded quilts, as well as a certain amount of chinaware. For the groom's special use she bought a toothbrush and towel; chopsticks, a tea-cup, and a rice-bowl. Two days before the wedding, the groom sent two pigskin trunks to hold the trousseau when it was moved to his house.

It would be hardly possible to arrange a dignified

wedding at less expense; and frequently thousands and thousands of dollars are expended on the trousseau, which is carried through the streets in great pomp a few days before the bride herself goes to her new home.

The month during which a wedding shall take place is dependent on the girl's cyclical animal. For instance, if she lives under the protection of my race, her marriage must take place during the Tenth Moon; if, however, my enemy the cock governs her sign, the wedding comes off during the Seventh Moon. I may remark parenthetically, and without prejudice, that the Seventh Moon shines during the most dangerous and least auspicious month in the whole long year. Why, it is the period when lonely, orphan spirits roam the universe, and it is only by unremitting care that one can avoid their retribution — a 'cock bride' must therefore be very, very wary.

The groom it is who enjoys the privilege of choosing the wedding day, and he reports his choice to the family of the bride by means of a note called the *chia ch'ü t'ieh*. In the West I know that people say, irrespectively, 'a woman marries' or 'a man marries'; but with my country-people it is quite different. They say a woman will *chia*, using a character which shows a roof with a pig under it. A man, however, will *ch'ü*, and this character shows a hand holding an ear. Soon after this *t'ieh* or note has been despatched, the groom sends his wedding gifts, in shining red lacquer receptacles, both open trays and tightly shut boxes, and one of the trays is sure to hold a live white goose. Indeed, this ceremony, when presents pass between the houses, is fifth of the famous

'six,' and is called 'the sending of the goose.' As white is the sign of mourning, the bird-emblem of conjugal fidelity is daubed with red, the colour of happiness. Weddings, I may add, are referred to by my country-people as 'the red affairs.'

Having received this warning that the moment of parting with their daughter is near, the bride's family delivers the trousseau which has been bought with the bridegroom's money. Such a marvellous procession as then trails along the public highway! Chairs, tables, wardrobes, chests — all the household goods; porcelain dishes; vases full of paper flowers, and scarlet trunks filled, as all the world knows, with dresses of silk and satin, and coats lined with softest furs. Wadded silk bed-quilts, folded and piled high in a riot of colour, always have a place in the procession, as do 'lucky gifts,' such as the leaves of 'ten thousand years green,' or rosy peony blooms, emblems of wealth; and various articles which convey a wish for speedy and numerous progeny. There is no limit to the magnificence possible if the bridegroom be well-to-do.

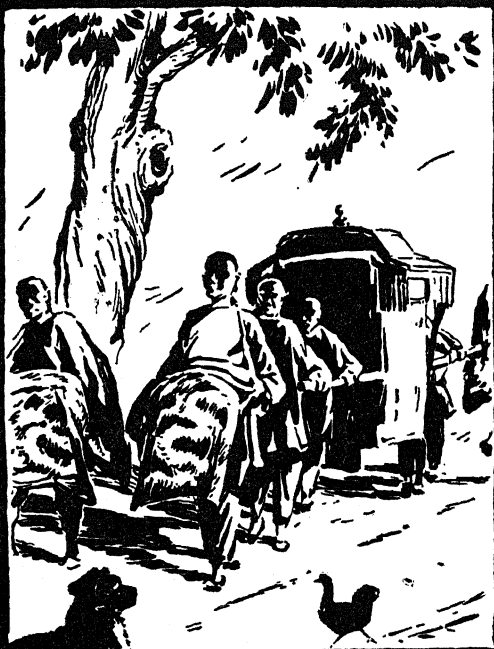
The sending of a goose in the case of which I speak had been very fine, and Amah had hurried out into the street to enjoy it, exclaiming, '*Ai-ya, ai-ya! wu ts'ai hua hung!*' 'Dear me, dear me! the five colours of good fortune! Flowers! Vermilion!' — which is the way my country-people describe any festive decorations or gorgeous display.

The wedding cortège itself is not so very elaborate, but the bridal chair is magnificence incarnate. It is covered with heavy, expensive, scarlet cloth, and this cloth, embroidered with every imaginable symbol of

good fortune, is studded with ten thousand brilliant discs, which discs serve as little mirrors to avert evil influences. Moreover, the sounds which accompany the bride are very elaborate, indeed. From drums, cymbals, gongs, trumpets, and brass instruments of every nature issues a veritable whirlwind of congratulatory music. Those on the four sides cannot but know that a new woman is coming. It is generally late in the day when she approaches her husband's house, and the plaited torches begin to shine at the hour of yellow dusk; so do the lanterns, huge lanterns on high poles bearing in red characters the bridegrooms's surname. The ones inscribed with the bride's surname, which always set forth with the procession, turn back from a point about midway between the two homes, when the important ceremony of 'receiving the bride' takes place. At that point red visiting-cards, bearing ancestral names of bride and groom, are exchanged by friends of the two families; the lantern-bearers perform an encircling and interweaving movement, and at the precise moment they finally separate, the woman's clan name is supposed to be changed into that of her husband.

As the bride I speak of neared our house, the last rays of the setting sun shone on the drums with their embroidered coverings, carried in front of the scarlet chair. As it passed, I saw, hung at the back, a white feather fan, signal that the precious burden was within.

At that moment Amah, who likes me to go everywhere with her, hurried to the Great Gate, and we started off together to see the bride lifted from her chair.



THE LAST RAYS OF THE SETTING SUN SHONE ON THE DRUMS WITH  
THEIR EMBROIDERED COVERINGS

A man whose cyclical animal lives in agreement with those of the bridal couple was busily engaged in letting off strings of firecrackers as we approached; and as the young girl, swathed in scarlet, was lifted from the chair, a protective sieve was held over her head. Everyone knows that a sieve lets only good fortune pass through its meshes. She was then lifted across the threshold where a charcoal fire burned, and at once placed her foot upon a saddle which lay at the door. The words 'saddle' and 'peace' being homonyms in Chinese, the saddle serves as an emblem of harmony.

The next step in the proceedings took place in front of a tablet known as the spiritual seat of 'Heaven, Earth, the Three Regions of Existence' (that is, the sky, the world, and the waters), 'the Ten Points of Direction, the Ten Thousand Spiritual Essences, and the True Ruler.' There the bride and groom together performed the deep prostration. This prostration they repeated to the tablets of his ancestors, to the Lord of the Kitchen Stove, and to each other. Cups of wine held together by a red cord were then exchanged, and the groom unveiled his bride. He lifted the heavy scarlet square which enveloped her head, parted her veil of threaded pearls, and looked her squarely in the face for the first time. So the marriage was made.

The great dread of a 'new woman' is generally her 'Honourable Mother-in-Law,' whose word is absolute in the household. She may be very charming to her daughter-in-law, but — she may be the reverse. Kind or cross, she must be served with devotion and complete obedience.

A bride does not leave her room until early on the



third morning after the wedding day. Then she steps down into the kitchen (the floor of the kitchen being actually lower than that of the rest of the house) to make ready the first meal. This rite is described in a Chinese eighth-century poem, which Missuss translated, called:

### THE NEWLY MARRIED WOMAN

On the third day I step down and enter the kitchen;  
I wash my hands, prepare the thick broth with meat and  
vegetables, and the thin clear soup.  
I do not know my Honourable Mother-in-Law's taste in  
regard to food;  
I will first depute my husband's little sister to try it.

On the day I speak of, after we had inspected the bride as she sat on the edge of her nuptial couch listening to the remarks all guests are free to make, and after we had partaken of tea, sweetmeats, and cake, Amah and I came home. When we stepped through the outer door into the north courtyard of the Grass Hut, one of the new, unseasoned beams cracked, ringing loudly as it did so. Amah nodded her head wisely as she shut the shining black gate behind us, and said:

A newly built house rings loudly for three years.

A newly married woman talks freely for three years.

Yo Fei's Missuss continues: Although we had many such experiences together, I always felt that Yo Fei's relationship to his country-people was far more intimate than my own: he and they seemed to understand each other completely.

In experiences of another sort he, of course, stood apart. I could not imagine that his canine mind reacted to the beauties of art and literature, so in speaking of these things I return to the tale of my own adventures.



## CHAPTER V

### PICTURES OF THE SEVEN FINE ARTS OF CHINA

#### SONG ON THE THEME OF A PINE-TREE SCREEN

#### BROUGHT BY THE TAOIST PRIEST, THE

#### HONOURABLE SCHOLAR LI

At clear dawn I, the venerable old man, comb my white head;  
The Taoist Priest from Hsüan Tu Monastery comes to seek me out.  
Gathering up my hair, I call my son to ask him in; he enters the  
door of my room,

Carrying rolled up in his hand a newly painted silver pine-tree  
screen.

The fir forest on the screen is peaceful, dark, mysterious;  
As I lean on the railing, it suddenly seems as if this were not the  
mere work of a painter, a dabbler in vermilion and green.

The dark precipice appears to actually uphold the frosted snowy  
stem;

The tree with its flat top is inclined, it bends back, it takes the  
shape of a moving, writhing, dragon.

I, the old man, my life long have loved strange old things;  
Seeing this picture wherein intelligence and inspiration are both  
manifest, I am greatly elated.

I already knew the Immortal Guest — I thought we were intimate;  
I now recognize the Great Artist; in his heart, none else but the  
travail of achievement.

TU FU: *The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*



## CHAPTER V

### *Pictures of the Seven Fine Arts of China*

#### CALLIGRAPHY

THE writing of Li Po-hai  
Is like the vermillion bird  
And the blue-green dragon.  
It drifts slowly as birds drift;  
It has the wide swiftness of wind.  
Hidden within it lurk the dragon and the tiger.

The writing of Chia, the official,  
Is like the high hat of ceremonial.  
It flashes like flowers in the hair.  
And its music is the trailing of robes  
And the sweet tinkling of jade girdle pendants.

ON A certain winter morning I came into the study of the Grass Hut for my lesson with Nung Chu hsien shêng, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos. As I entered the room, I gasped with delight. The pearl-shell windows were wide open, and through them I could see that the courtyard had, during the night, been covered by a light fall of snow. The winter sun shone, dazzling, on the snow-crystals sprinkled lightly over the Dogs of Fo. Beyond them could be seen the roof of the garage made of those black tiles which resemble the backs of mud eels.

The yellow sunshine poured past this dazzling black-and-white picture and flowed into the study through the yellow petals of the *chimonanthus*, or Last Moon Plum, which stood in a tall creamy vase directly in the open window.

My teacher waited smiling until I had looked my fill of this sudden beauty, then I took my place at the seven-

foot-long study table, where the ponderous Chinese dictionaries were piled in order on their racks. Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos had promised to talk to me this morning of the Seven Fine Arts of China.

He had scarcely begun when he saw by my puzzled face that I did not yet know what was meant by the Seven Fine Arts. Sometimes, I am sure, he felt utterly discouraged before the ignorance of a Western lady.

'Is it possible that Love-Poetry-Mother does not know what these are?' he asked, and, as I shook my head, proceeded patiently to name them: 'Calligraphy — that is, fine writing — painting, playing the table-lute, playing hedged-in checkers, writing poems, drinking wine, and cultivating flowers.'

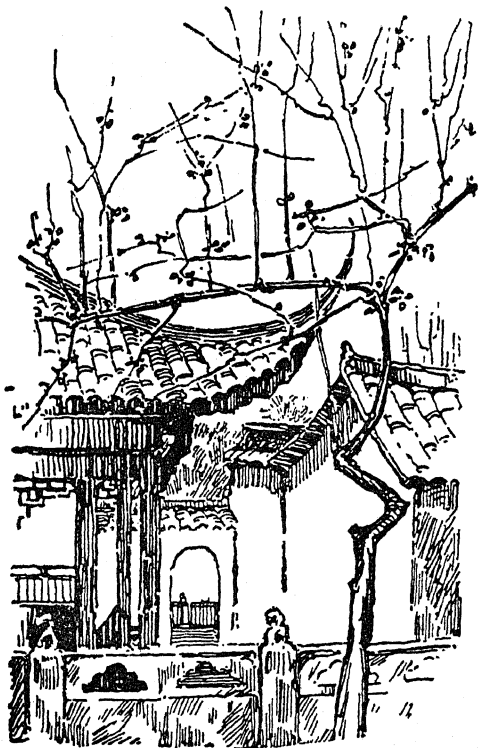
'Drinking wine?' said I. 'And cultivating flowers?'

'Certainly,' he answered; 'and to practise these fine arts a man must have a lovely quiet place. He likes best to go to the hills and live in a grass hut among the peaks. If he can't do that, he tries to have a quiet pavilion in a lovely garden.'

'But why,' I asked, 'do you mention calligraphy before painting, poetry, or music? Do you think that it is a higher art than the others?'

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos relaxed his attitude a little. He always sat very correctly and would never have dreamed of crossing his knees or leaning back in an armchair. But when he was deeply interested, he did allow himself to sit a little less straight. The arts were profoundly interesting to him, and he began to talk freely.

'You ask why calligraphy comes first, Ai Shih Mu? It is, indeed, the most important of the arts, for both



A QUIET PAVILION IN A LOVELY GARDEN

poetry and painting spring from the *tzŭ*, the written characters or ideographs of the Chinese language.'

Seeing that this was a new idea to me, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos then told me the story of Fu Hsi, the First Emperor, who was 'covered with scales like a fish,' but whose intelligence was 'bright as the sun and the moon.' My teacher, who spoke no English, always talked with me in Chinese, so I must here translate his words:

In the dim ages before history began, Fu Hsi stood one day on the banks of the river Lo. Suddenly there



漁人隱集澄潭  
下買得魚憶返照  
來  
江上遠光



AN EXAMPLE OF CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY  
The poem 'Fishing Picture,' by Ta Chung-kuang

rose from the water a creature, half dragon, half horse, which bore on its back a scroll inscribed with mystic diagrams. These diagrams, called the *Pa Kua*, or Eight Trigrams, cannot properly be called writing, but they became the basis of a system of philosophy. My readers can see them on the chart page of this book. Fu Hsi accepted the diagrams from the dragon-horse, and invented from them a new method of keeping records. Until this time records had been kept by means of knotted cords.

The actual art of writing is supposed to have been invented by a four-eyed individual, named Ts'ang Chieh, about 2650 B.C. as the books state. 'He observed the shapes of things in Heaven, the forms of things on earth, and the footprints of birds upon the sand.'

The five hundred and forty Primitive Characters were pictures of the things Ts'ang Chieh observed with such concentration. The books record that when he first made them, probably using a stick dipped in lacquer, and writing on strips of bamboo, 'all Nature was moved. Heaven rained millet, demons wailed in the night, dragons hid themselves in the depths.'

What this earliest Chinese picture-writing looked like can be seen in lines one, three, and five of Chart I. Reading from left to right we see: the sun, the crescent moon, hills, a tree with waving branches and deep-struck roots, a hand, an eye, streams, fire, a fish, a woman, a child in swaddling bands, its legs wrapped as the Chinese wrap them to this day, and a man.

Writing on strips of bamboo with a stick dipped in lacquer is slow work. About two hundred years before Christ, the bamboo writing-brush was invented, and



CHART I

Chinese scholars began to write more quickly on rolls of silk. It can be seen that the quickness with which writing is done makes a difference in the look of characters. The old painstaking pictures of things, or 'pictographs,' became conventionalized as the writing-brush swiftly covered the rolls of silk. Lines two, four, and six on the chart show the new forms of characters under the old. Sometimes the original picture has become conventionalized almost out of recognition.



HORSE — MODERN CHARACTER

It is fascinating to trace the origins of characters. I shall never forget the thrill I felt when I recognized the old form of the Chinese character for horse — the modern form I knew quite well. I was standing on a glorious autumn day under the brightly coloured arch which led to the Confucian temple in Peiping. There is an inscription describing a hunting party cut into the ancient stone drums under this arch. As I recognized the ancient character for 'horse,' I suddenly realized



HORSE — ANCIENT CHARACTER

that originally it had been a speaking likeness. Yes! There was the backbone, there the four feet, the mane and the tail.

The change in the form of the pictograph is no doubt due to the invention of the writing-brush. The inventor

is said to have been the General Mêng T'ien who was sent by the Great First Emperor to oversee the building of the Great Wall of China, and no doubt he felt a need for a quicker way of writing to his far-off family and friends in the intervals of his arduous task.

We do not know the name nor the date of the genius who so longed to put his more abstract thoughts and feelings into writing that he invented a way to do it. But we know how he undertook to add to Chinese letters a means by which the subtlest ideas and dreams of man could be expressed. He combined suitable 'pictographs' and thus made 'ideographs' — that is, written ideas.

Lines one, three, and five of Chart II show the old forms; lines two, four, and six the new. Reading from left to right we see: the sun and moon written together. The idea conveyed is brilliance. Two trees mean a forest, three trees deep shade. Streams and flames of fire spell disaster — what could be more vivid than that? A hand shading the eye means to gaze into far distance, while an eye placed over the sign for man means to see something near at hand.

One of the most charming combinations is that expressing love and everything good. He who first wrote it evidently thought of the two things he loved best — his wife and his child. He then combined the pictures of each to produce the character *hao*: used in many ways, but always to express something good and beautiful.

Chinese writing, then, is a series of ideas built up from a pictorial basis, and the actual formation of the characters with a writing-brush is looked upon as a very high art. An inspired calligraphist will write wonderful

〇)

𣎵𣎵

日月

木木

𣎵𣎵

𣎵火

𣎵𣎵

𣎵火

𣎵

見

看

見

rhythmic forms full of vitality, but very difficult to read. Of such a writer the Chinese will say: 'His brush runs off dragons and snakes.'

The Chinese next wrote down their thoughts on silk with a bamboo writing-brush dipped in lacquer. But silk was expensive and lacquer dried slowly. In A.D. 105, a certain Ts'ai Lun reported to the Emperor that he had combined 'tree bark, hemp, rags, and fish-nets' to produce a new material. This material was — paper.

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos smiled at me proudly as he told how this commodity, now used in vast quantities all over the world, had been invented by a Chinese. But his face sobered as he went on to relate how Ts'ai Lun, having rendered so great a service to mankind, had become, later, involved in palace intrigues of such seriousness that in despair — so the old books tell — 'he went home, took a bath, combed his hair, put on his best robes — and drank poison.'

After the invention of paper came the invention of ink. This was produced by a certain Wei Tang in the third or fourth century of the Christian era. He made it by lighting a number of wicks in a bowlful of oil, and collecting the lampblack in an iron dome placed over the whole. This lampblack is scraped off the inside of the dome, mixed with gum and dried into sticks. To use it, the stick is moistened with water and rubbed on a smooth ink slab made of stone or slate. This is the ink which the Chinese still use, and which for some unexplained reason we call India ink!

A fine calligraphist in China rolls his bamboo rabbit's-hair brush in the ink prepared on his ink-stone, and

swiftly, with easy, flowing gestures, covers his strip of silk or beautiful Chinese paper with 'characters full of life's movement.' The result is often prized more than the finest painting or poem. Indeed, any piece of fine writing used to be looked upon as sacred. Even today it is not uncommon to see men with little baskets on their backs, searching the streets for every scrap of paper which bears an ideograph in order to burn it in a special furnace. Rich men acquire merit by paying others thus to search out and save from desecration the written word.

#### PAINTING

I have told you of the compradore's Chinese paintings which gave me so much pleasure when he would consent to take them out of their beautiful boxes lined with soft yellow silk. I used often to go, too, to the mansion where the dealer Lee Van Ching displayed his precious porcelains, jades, crystals, and potteries. And I loved to poke in the dirty little shops which lined Pig Creek, a stretch of the moat running below the wall of the native city, where I purchased many treasures. The shops in the city itself were delightful, and I went there whenever I wanted a real 'thrill,' because I quickly overcame the repulsion to the dirt which I felt on my first visit.

But I never thought of Chinese art in a comprehensive fashion until I talked with Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos. He, who has an exceptionally deep admiration for women, smiled somewhat mischievously as he quoted a Chinese scholar's disgusted remark on the origin of painting. 'Alas!' exclaimed this learned woman-



hater, 'that this divine art should have been invented by a woman!'

Legend, indeed, ascribes the invention of painting to the younger sister of the virtuous Emperor Shun. Her name was Lei, and men called her 'Picture Lei.'

One of the earliest poets describes wall paintings which he saw some two hundred and fifty years before Christ, and very interesting replicas on stone have been found of wall paintings in a palace which was built



REPLICA IN STONE OF A HAN PAINTING

'Fu Hsi his person cased in scales;  
Nü Kua her body like a snake'

during the second century before Christ. A poem was written about these, too, and it tells us that the paintings represented the five dragons, wings interlocked; the Lord of Men, nine-headed; the scaly Fu Hsi, and the

Lady Nü Kua, whose body was like a snake, and many other vast undefined shapes.

As my teacher discoursed on the origin of Chinese



FROM A CHINESE LANDSCAPE SCROLL

painting, my mind ran over what I had myself observed of the way the Chinese painter works. He never sits before his model to make experimental sketches as Western artists do, nor does he go out with canvas and easel to paint a view. No. He studies his theme until it is fully in his mind, or walks among the hills until they have become a part of his being. Then, and then only, does he put his writing-brush to paper or silk.

It is enchanting to watch a Chinese artist write or paint. He concentrates a moment, his brush poised in air. It drops, and then seems literally to fly over the surface of the material he is using. The swift, sure strokes produce a real work of art. A stroke, once made, can never be altered.

My friend the compradore once told me how a Chinese artist works. He said, 'Thinkee, thinkee — long time. Do — chop chop!'

Chinese pictures are painted in several different forms. There are the large hanging paintings for the

centre of the Guest-Hall; and smaller ones to be hung at the sides. These are painted in pairs or in sets of four; there are also many forms of album leaves.

In addition to the hanging pictures and album leaves, the Chinese paint what they call 'hand scrolls,' and these are the most characteristic of all. They are supposed to be unrolled very slowly, and should be looked at only a small bit at a time. Whatever bit is shown, however, should make a complete composition and a lovely group. After spending an hour or so studying a landscape scroll, one feels that one has taken a long journey among hills and along streams. Here one reaches a village and there a crooked river. Men are



A WILD GOOSE DROPPING TO EARTH IS FULL OF RHYTHM  
From a Chinese painting



A TIGER, SYMBOL OF ALL EARTH FORCES

From a Chinese painting

fishing; here in the hills they are gathering firewood; we climb higher, and find a scholar's hut; higher still, and see far off across mountain ranges, and wide stretches of water. Nothing is actual or photographic; it is all suggested in the most delicate way imaginable.

Herein lies the great difference between Eastern painting — including, of course, Japanese — and Western painting, which is far more realistic. I think that it is fair to say that the Western artist represents, while the Eastern artist suggests.

And how the Eastern artist can suggest movement! A wild goose dropping to earth is full of rhythm. A grapevine tossed in the wind seems to sway before our eyes. A tiger — he is the symbol of all earth forces — is ready to spring; and the dragon, ruler of the clouds, seems to float on their billows.

Because these artists are accustomed to studying landscapes from among the hills, the perspective they use is generally that of a bird upon the wing, and is strange to the Western eye. But, it may be remarked, it is not so strange now as it was before airplane photographs were common.

#### PLAYING THE TABLE-LUTE

*On Hearing the Buddhist Priest of Shu Play his Table-Lute*

BY LI T'AI PO

The Priest of the Province of Shu, carrying his table-lute in a cover of green shot silk.

Comes down the Western slope of the peak of Mount Omei. He moves his hands for me, striking the lute.

It is like listening to the waters in ten thousand ravines, and the wind in ten thousand pine trees.

The traveller's heart is washed clean as in flowing water.

The echoes of the overtones join with the evening bell.

I am not conscious of the sunset behind the jade-grey hill, Nor of how many and dark are the autumn clouds.

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, as he spoke of the delights of hearing the table-lute well played, shook his



SEE POEM ON HEARING THE BUDDHIST PRIEST PLAY HIS  
TABLE-LUTE  
From a Chinese painting

head sadly. 'Ah, very few people play the *ch'in*, the table-lute, today,' he said. 'They like better the piano, which is called the *yang ch'in*, or foreign table-lute.'

The whole subject of music is very complicated in China, and the Chinese have always considered it most important. The great teacher Confucius was himself a composer, and once travelled a long way to consult a famous musician. It is said that he was so moved by the music of a certain hymn that for three months he did not taste meat.

#### PLAYING HEDGED-IN CHECKERS

##### *Pair of Antithetical Phrases*

From *The Dream of the Red Chamber*

Tea from the rare tripod-cauldron is consumed, but the dark smoke still rises;

Chess by the quiet window is ended, but the fingers are still cold from holding the stone pieces.

My teacher spoke only briefly of the next fine art, *wei ch'i*, or hedged-in checkers. He, like most Chinese scholars, played it with enthusiasm, and it was a lasting regret to him that I always firmly refused to learn it, and so could never give him a game. The name is often translated as 'chess,' but it does not really resemble the Western game except in difficulty. In Japan, *wei ch'i* is called *go-bang*. Westerners have borrowed the Japanese name and applied it to a quite different sort of game.

The ancient game of *wei ch'i* is first mentioned in Chinese writings about 625 B.C. It is played on a square board cut by eighteen lines each way. The play is at the points where the lines cut or meet; there are, therefore, 361 places.

The two players have each a bagful of round, flat stones, black for one side, white for the other. The moves are alternate, and the object is to occupy as much of the board as possible. This is done either by surrounding and so capturing the enemy pieces or by enclosing unoccupied sections of the board. The unoccupied points thus *hedged-in* count to the player as well as the occupied ones.

*Wei ch'i* looks a simple game to the uninitiated, but as played by a subtle, ingenious Chinese scholar, it can prove to be a most perplexing affair. And as I often explained to Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, a Western lady absorbed in the study of Chinese had too much else to do, to learn to play it properly. So with what seemed to me a mildly reproachful look, my teacher dropped the subject of this fascinating game and turned to a fine art which interests him even more profoundly — poetry.

## POETRY

### I

Books on the bed piled high as the house,  
Trees growing before the steps brushing the clouds.

The General in the army does not like uncultivated fighting  
men;  
His little sons are most intelligent; they write essays.

We wake after drinking wine; a light breeze blows through  
the room,  
And we listen to poems in the silent midnight.

Shadows of wistaria tendrils hang on our grass-cloth robes,  
And the chilly moonlight is a confused mass of white.



## II

On the level terrace, as the sun sinks,  
Sipping new tea in the season of spring wind.

Sitting sideways against the stone balustrade, I dip my  
writing-brush in ink  
And write poems on *wu t'ung* leaves.

On the bamboo clothes-rack a kingfisher calls;  
On the silk fishing-line a dragon-fly lights.

Now inspiration begotten by solitude burns within me;  
I also come, go, without restraint.

When Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos had read to me these poems, written, in the eighth century, by Tu Fu while on a visit to the General Ho, I said, 'I am quite sure that no other people in the world are so fond of poetry as are the Chinese.'

My teacher agreed. 'The love of poetry in China extends from the most learned scholars through all classes of society down to the humblest households, where, although the people cannot read, they hang on their walls poems written in beautiful characters and mounted like pictures.'

As Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos spoke, I remembered a Chinese friend of mine who, although he could not distinguish one character from another, yet brought me as a parting gift a reproduction of a beautifully written poem. He was the green-keeper of a golf course in the North, a Chinese nicknamed Fritz. He seemed quite Westernized, and used to go in swimming wearing a scarlet bathing-cap to keep his pigtail dry. We became

quite friendly, and when I left, the gift he brought me showed that, although illiterate himself, he yet knew that letters were admirable, and had chosen his written picture with unerring taste.

'As you know,' said Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, 'from time immemorial, official positions in China have been allotted only to men who were able to pass the State examinations. Except for the Imperial clan, and of course the family of the sage Confucius, we have had no aristocracy of blood; only an aristocracy of learning. The examinations were open to all, and were purely literary. Thus the men who governed us (until the forming of a republic changed matters) had to prove their knowledge of literature and their ability to write beautiful essays and poems.'

I knew that examinations, which even in the life of Western students play so large a part, were immensely more important, indeed all-important in China. They were the only road to success in public life, and I had heard of scholars continuing to go up for their examinations until they were eighty years old! The famous poet Tu Fu was never able to pass the rigid examinations set, however. He failed three times, and was at last made an official by a special decree of the Emperor, who held his poetry in high esteem.

I asked Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos to tell me how the examinations were conducted. I paraphrase his words:

They were held once every three years, he said, in the provincial capitals.

The Chief Examiner, a most important person, was never a native of the Province where he officiated and

every possible precaution was taken to avoid his being influenced in favour of this candidate or that, on his journey to take up the post. The boat he travelled in on his way to Nanking, for instance, was carefully sealed when he embarked, and at each stopping-place the local official added his own seal. Arrived at Nanking, the Great Man entered a tightly closed green official chair and was hurried to the Examination Halls, which had been prepared for his use. These preparations were most elaborate, and Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos described them in detail, smiling as he did so.

Ai Shih Mu must know that the halls were only used for the examinations, and in three years between, the weeds and grass grew long. When the time came to set all in order, an old, old woman was found to unlock the Great Gate; then a number of 'snake-catchers' were admitted. There are people who make snake-catching their business. They cleared away all the reptiles and insects they could find, cut the grass and pulled up the weeds, thus making the outside respectable. An army of whitewashers, painters, and carpenters followed to make the halls look fresh.

The Chief Examiner took up his residence in the main hall, but only remained there while the candidates were actually writing their papers. At that time he was regarded as the Emperor's representative, and the Fox Spirit, which was supposed to inhabit the main hall at other times, was willing to move out for so great a person.

After the candidates left, however, and the tedious business of reading papers was commenced, the Chief Examiner became once more a mere examiner, and moved into one of the side buildings. The Fox Spirit

was then supposed to return to the main hall, where he remained until the triennial examinations were again due.

In the Examination Halls there were thousands and thousands of little cells, each about three feet wide and four feet deep. Many thousands of candidates came for each examination, and each man was shut up alone in a cell, there to remain for three days. At dawn on the first morning, men threaded their way between the cells, calling out the theme on which the candidates were to compose. Then for three days they wrote, speaking to no one. At intervals tea and rice were brought to them. Only a small proportion of the candidates passed, but those who did automatically became officials.

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos paused and smiled; I knew that he was about to tell an amusing story:

'A great centre for examinations was, of course, the city of Nanking. Scholars from three Provinces flocked there. On the night before the examinations, the district magistrate would send an empty boat across the great river at dusk. But this boat was not intended for the use of candidates. It was to be filled with different, invisible passengers — with spirits!

'When the boatman reached the farther bank, he would hang a lighted lantern at the top of a stick and cry aloud, over and over again in a monotonous voice,

*Yu yüan, pao yüan! yu yüan pao yüan!*

That is to say,

All who have suffered a wrong,  
Come and avenge the wrong!

'Gradually the boat, though still apparently empty,

sank lower and lower in the water until the gunwale was nearly submerged. The boatman watched until the weight of the spirits seemed as much as the boat could endure, then he took down his lantern and sculled the invisibly laden vessel heavily back to Nanking. On arrival at the bank, the boat became as mysteriously lightened — the vengeful spirits had left it, swarming in search of whoever among the candidates had wronged them during life!

‘It is a fact that very often scholars were found dead in the close cells at the end of the examination periods. Were they destroyed, perhaps, by the spirit of someone they had wronged? Or had perhaps the rigour of the examination, shut up as they were in tiny cells during the hottest period of the year been too much for the scholars?’

‘Because the fine art of poetry is so universally cultivated in China,’ continued my teacher, ‘the literati have invented many games based on the improvising of poems. Scholars at a banquet, for example, often play a poetry game in which the singing-girls take part. The scholars, each in turn, hum poems of their own composition. The singing-girls listen and cry out when they hear a poem they recognize. They also learn by heart any poem they particularly like in order to sing it elsewhere. The girls keep count through the evening of the poems they have heard before, and the most popular poet wins by acclamation.’

When Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos had finished telling me of this learned game — for all the poets of China have been scholars, and all the scholars try, at least, to be poets — I remembered another poetry game. In-

deed, I had made a journey to the place where it used chiefly to be played.

This place was called the Orchid Flower Pavilion. Beside it was a large rock garden, with a very twisted stream winding among boulders. The scholars, on the third day of the third month, assembled, and sat at various points of vantage on the rocks. Their little serving boys, chosen for their purity of heart, attended them with prepared ink-stones.

The Master of Ceremonies then set a little tray afloat on the stream. On the tray had been placed a tiny cup of wine, a roll of silk, and a writing-brush. All watched until it struck against a rock and stopped before one of the scholar-poets. He who had been thus designated instantly drank off the wine, seized the writing-brush and silk, and wrote a poem as fast as his brush could move. It must have been a very exciting game, for the stream was *very* curly, and while the floating tray dipped and hesitated there was no telling whether or not it might suddenly bump against your rock — in which case you would have to catch up the brush and write like blazes!

There are many beautiful love poems in Chinese literature. Many were written by women, but even when written by a man, love poems were always put into the mouth of a woman. I spoke of this once when lecturing at a girls' college in North China, and noticed a student in the first row make some comment on the point to her teacher. Later the teacher said to me, 'Miss Wang says you are quite right about love poems. Her mother often writes love poems to her father, though the children are never allowed to read them.'

Apart from writing lyrical and narrative poems, the Chinese have loved doing all sorts of stunt poetry. One of the best-known of these is one written by a lady in the form of a circle. The characters went round and round — it didn't matter where you started, the poem made sense.

Chinese poetry has such a long history behind it and is so made up of suggestion and allusion that unless the reader knows the Chinese background, he loses much of the meaning and not a little of the beauty. Miss Lowell and I frequently encountered this difficulty in our work.

Not only these allusions and suggestions make the task of the translator very complicated. Another difficulty is that the things referred to by the Chinese poet are strange to us. In reading or translating poems from the Chinese, one has constantly to visualize houses, boats, trees, plants — to say nothing of social customs — very different from those in the West. It is well worth the effort, however, for anyone who reads and understands Chinese poetry, has discovered a new and enchanting world.

#### DRINKING WINE

##### *Drinking Alone in the Moonlight*

BY LI T'AI PO

If Heaven did not love wine,  
There would be no Wine Star in Heaven.  
If Earth did not love wine,  
There would be no Wine springs on Earth.  
Why then be ashamed before Heaven to love wine?  
I have heard that clear wine is like the Sages;  
Again it is said that thick wine is like the Virtuous Worthies;  
Wherefore it appears that we have swallowed both Sages and  
Worthies.

Why should we strive to be Gods and Immortals?  
Three cups, and one can perfectly understand the Great Tao;  
A gallon and one is in accord with all nature.  
Only those in the midst of it can fully comprehend the joys  
of wine;  
I do not proclaim them to the sober.

‘How strange!’ said I; ‘you consider drinking wine a fine art?’

‘Why, certainly,’ replied Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, ‘it is an art to drink exactly the right amount of wine.’

He then went on to explain that the Chinese word *tsui*, which is generally translated as ‘drunk,’ does not mean what we express by that term. In fact, the Chinese consider it most vulgar and incorrect to become bemused with wine. The art consists in taking just that amount which will stimulate the imagination and make the brain work quickly — no more.

At a banquet, for instance, a gentleman will bow politely and say: ‘No, thank you; no more wine; I am *tsui*.’ Now one cannot imagine a Western gentleman as saying: ‘No, thank you, no more wine, I am drunk’! *Tsui* and ‘drunk’ are distinctly different.

The wine is, generally speaking, made from fermented grain. It is taken, warmed, from tiny cups no bigger than liqueur glasses, and is served from tall flagons rather like our coffee-pots. The scholars of the past had little serving boys, chosen for their intelligence, who accompanied them, carried their lutes, warmed their wine, cleaned their ink-stones, and kept their writing materials in order. In Chinese paintings, these little serving boys are nearly always seen beside their masters whom they looked upon as teachers and patterns in every way.



## CULTIVATING FLOWERS

*I Accompany Chêng the Kuang Wên on a Stroll to the  
Hill Forest of General Ho*

By TU FU

The famous garden lies beside pellucid waters;  
Wild bamboos rise to the blue sky.

Scholars met in olden days at the mouth of Ku Valley;  
And learned men were invited to the hamlet of Hao Liang.

My life long I have found inspiration in lonely places;  
I care not how far my horse's hoofs must travel.

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos and I often discussed the cultivating of flowers, for he was deeply interested in my arrangement of flowers, trees, rocks, and water in the courtyards of the Grass Hut. Chinese scholars have a peculiar love for their gardens, since it is there that all the other fine arts have been chiefly practised.

At ease, or, as the Chinese put it, 'with open heart,' in his garden, the scholar found inspiration for poems, music, and painting. There he drank his wine and played *wei ch'i*.

As far as I can discover, no books on gardens, as such, exist in China, and this is not difficult to understand, as the garden is simply the fruit of vivid imagination. But there are many treatises in Chinese on the growing of flowers.

In the eleventh century, soon after William the Conqueror invaded Britain, a certain Liu Ming wrote a work on chrysanthemums, dividing these flowers into thirty-five varieties; and a writer of the Yüan Dynasty, which

flourished about the time of Edward I, divided the *mutan* peony into thirty-nine classes.

The *lan hua*, that exquisitely scented little epiden-drum, has also received much attention as have the various species of the *pyrus*. Certain flowers are planted in *t'ai*, raised beds surrounded by walls, and this method seems to me one of the few features which might be imported into Western gardens.

Flower shows, or rather flower competitions, are popular and are now open to the public, though doubtless they had their origin, as ours probably did, in private competitions among friends.

Most important are shows of dwarf plum trees, *lan hua*, chrysanthemum, *mutan* peony, and melons, but azaleas are also occasionally shown. The *lan hua* are divided into two main classes, spring blooming and autumn blooming, while subdivisions are innumerable. The great interest lies in the strangely varied petals of this tiny flower. In competitions, prizes are given for novelties. Each year at the shows held in the Shanghai City the preëminent plant is raised on a high stand in the centre of the hall. It may be one that has won this honour for several years, but if not, the vanquished winners of the years before are placed beside it. Something new is always sought for — as when flowers with white hearts triumphed over red; when in their turn yellow hearts took the place of white; and when 'lotus-petals' and then 'bean-petals' first appeared.

In the *lan hua* season those who love flowers send many *li* along the water-ways to meet the boats of *lan hua*-gatherers coming from the hills, and often buy a whole boatload in the hope of discovering a novelty.



PLANTS ON HIGH STANDS AT A LAN HUA SHOW

Chrysanthemums are given very charming and refined names. The yellow button, similar to the wild form, is called 'Heaven full of Stars'; the white quill, 'Goosefeathers Tube'; the yellow quill, 'Carrot-Threads'; the large ragged mauve, 'Drunk-with-Wine-

Made-from-Peaches-of-the-Immortals'; the big single white with a yellow centre, 'Jade Saucer Gold Cup'; the varieties with very fine petals, 'Pine Needles,' or 'Dragon's Beard'; red ground and white dots, 'Maple Leaves and Reed Flowers'; white streaked with red, 'Snow-on-the-Ground-Rouge,' the idea suggested being either that of a young girl admiring the snow, or the journey of the lovely Wang Chao Chün to the snowy wastes of Central Asia.

The *mutan* peony is looked upon as the flower of light, of strength and masculinity, and is the King of flowers. Its very name, *mu* meaning male, and *tan*, vermilion, suggests the qualities attributed to the blossom: qualities which have caused it to be chosen as a symbol for good fortune. In fact, it is often referred to as the *fu kuei* — that is, happiness and wealth — or the Lo Yang *hua* — flower of Lo Yang, because it is supposed to have originally come from that city.

As the petals do not vary, the names chosen depend on colour; thus the deep red blossoms are known as ink, the white as jade, and the cream as bright *mutan*. The ink and a variety with a yellow mark at the petal edge known as golden-border *mutan*, are the most highly prized, while the ordinary pink variety has no special name.

Azalea shows are more modern, and so are enchanting shows of Buddha's hand citrons, and melons. These gourds and citrons are arranged in certain prescribed manners. For Guest-Halls they are piled on plates, three below and one on top; but for the study, single specimens are placed in valuable bowls on fine white sand or rice. The citrons are especially valued for their

scent, and the gourds for their wonderful variety of colours.

In discussing the planning of gardens, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos said:

‘You ask, Why should one make a garden? Perhaps the place one lives in is bustling and noisy, and one’s heart is therefore not “open.”’ (The Chinese idiom for being at peace.) ‘When a man is born, he has three great needs: food, clothes, and a dwelling-place. Now food and clothes should be varied and the dwelling-place should not be monotonous. Man likes variety. Even the uncultivated man goes to the hills, though he does not always appreciate them, but the cultivated man of refined tastes does appreciate them.

‘It is not important that a man should be rich to make a garden, although of course it takes money, but he must be cultivated and refined. He longs to bring the hills to himself so that he can have a natural view; the only way he can do this is to have a garden — this is his great reason. If the site chosen be flat and uninteresting, the garden will be as if cut from wood; to give interest one should be able to see far, and for this reason one must have hills.

‘There is no garden without hills and without water. High hills, from which the rain runs down, always have streams on their sides and round their bases. These must also be represented in the garden. One can tell by the nature of the hills made, by the naturalness or artificiality of the streams, whether a man’s learning be great or small. Of course gardens can be placed on any site, but the cultivated man will go to the uncrowded part of the city, near the wall, so that when he climbs



ONE MUST ALSO HAVE WATER

his hills he may be able to see far out into the country — so that he may forget he is surrounded by houses.'

Naturally the periods when an official could leave behind him the cares of the world and retire to the actual wild were rare. Moreover, leaving himself out of the question, the women of China were debarred by the social system in vogue from ever enjoying the experience of actual sojourn in desolate places; therefore one may say that the planning of a Chinese garden was a case of literally bringing the mountain to Mahomet! Gardens

were planned for various reasons, and not the least frequent was to give pleasure to some woman, a mother or a lovely favourite, as of course the tastes of educated women were the same as those of men.

Many historic gardens have existed in China, and a point worthy of notice is that a couple of hundred years before the Christian era, the Emperor Wu of Han created an immense pleasure ground called the *Shang Lin*, or Royal Park, where he desired to spend happy days and hours. However, public opinion, always so powerful in China, frowned upon this monopolization of arable land and he was obliged to give up his park and allow the farmers to put it under cultivation again.

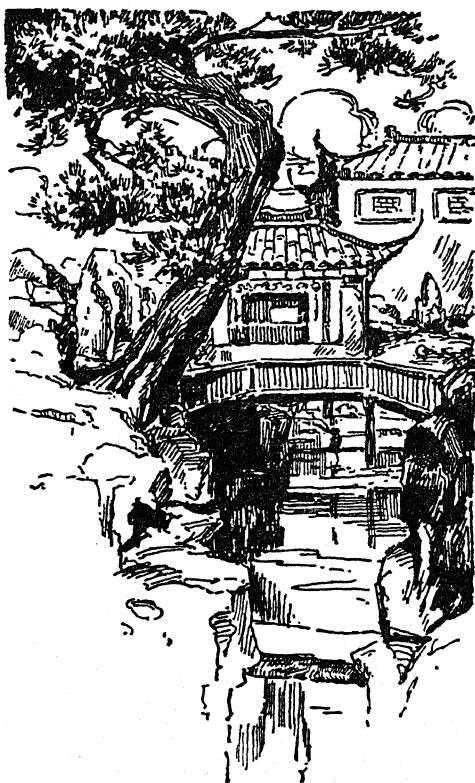
This incident is an example of the fact that the Chinese have never permitted an individual, no matter how high his rank, to absorb too much ground for his private use. Gardens, though full of hills, lakes, valleys, and vistas, in reality occupy a comparatively small space, and extensive private pleasure grounds, with large lawns, wide herbaceous borders, and elaborate parterres, such as are common in the West, would not be tolerated for a moment.

A Chinese has always been obliged to confine his garden within a small space and has never been allowed seriously to interfere with the most important business of life — that is, agriculture. In this connection it may be recalled that, according to the Chinese division, the four classes of society are: first, scholars; second, agriculturists; third, labourers; fourth, traders. Soldiers, sailors, and other classes whom we honour are not considered as worthy of mention in the social system.

Many cities in Mid-China are famous for their gar-

dens. Nanking, Soochow, and Hangchow are all noted in this respect.

Shanghai, too, possesses the lovely remains of a renowned garden, and this I studied with the greatest care. It is fully described in the 'Historical Records of the Shanghai City,' by Pan Ên, the man who built it in the sixteenth century: 'For twenty years I continued to build the garden. I sat a sit — I thought a thought — I rested a rest, it was still not very good.... My



JOY OF FISHES SUMMERHOUSE



first reason for doing this was to give my mother pleasure.'

Most of the things Pan Ên speaks of have vanished. I have tried in vain to find the house with 'a red railing — the Joy of Fishes Summerhouse — standing on the water's edge,' where Pan Ên and his friends leaned over the balustrade and threw rice cakes to the fishes just as people delight to do today. Amah, for instance, thoroughly enjoys tying a large cake in her handkerchief and dragging it over the surface of the water to lure fish from their depths.

The furnishings of a garden, apart from the plants and trees, the rocks and pools, provided by nature but transplanted by man, are very varied; the most important being writings and paintings which embellish the different buildings and walls.

Among the most interesting features are what are known as the 'ornamented walls.' These are of two main sorts. Those with openings made in fantastic shapes through which a glimpse of something beyond is gained, and those with very carefully prepared surfaces on which guests can paint a picture or write a poem. These last are, of course, solid, and, in addition to the writings and painting referred to, often have stone tablets with famous inscriptions let into them.

Groups of clay figures representing historical scenes are also popular, but these cannot be relied on as far as accuracy of detail is concerned; one often sees a hero in the dress of the Chou Dynasty in battle with an opponent who wears that of, shall one say, the T'ang? The masons, not being educated men, follow their own fancy, and as long as they make figures full of life the owner is

satisfied. The Chinese have a saying, 'Ornament has no defined order; if it provides distraction — that is sufficient.'



A WALL WITH BUTTERFLY OPENINGS

All this ornament is, of course, very expensive; even in the old days the decoration over a gateway might easily cost three thousand ounces of silver, and today quite a small garden must cost several times ten thousand.

Dragon walls are very popular and give the effect

that the garden is running up-hill and down-dale. The addition of a head and tail is probably rather modern, and is certainly greatly used at present.

The city of Soochow is especially famous for its gardens. There we see the Lion Forest with its beautiful rocks, and there, too, the remains of the 'Returned Garden.'

Its history is given in a record, cut in stone, placed in the garden itself. It tells of the second visit made by the venerable Chinese who wrote it, and reads, in part, as follows:

It seemed as though the hills were higher; it seemed as though the pools were deeper; and as though the peaks were more numerous. The clouds of Heaven were reflected from the surface of the water. The houses had not really altered, but it seemed as if the buildings were higher. Indeed, it was even more beautiful than before. The place was the old place, but the crooked paths, the curves of the pools all seemed increased and added to. It was as if my eyes saw it for the first time.

High boughs of trees, pressing against each other, prevented the sun's rays from penetrating; low boughs wrote characters on the mirrored surface of the water. A marvellous stone was well placed. In front of the Great Hall stood rows of rare flowers. I did not know their names.

The lord of the garden prepared wine, and bade his guests drink; they chanted songs they chatted, and rejoiced. Their pleasure was refined, not in the least coarse. Birds flew, fish swam, it was like the days of old when neither fish nor bird feared man. Although one had not left the city mart, one seemed to have reached the hills and forests. My eyes and heart were refreshed even more than on the first visit.

I counted on my fingers, it was four or five years since the garden had been restored and the former ancient beauties had returned. Therefore we named the garden Fu — Returned!



DRAGON WALLS ARE VERY POPULAR



A WELL-MODELLED HEAD IN THE INNER GARDEN

The record closes in the following characteristically Chinese manner:

Chiang the Ssü-ma did not wish to inscribe his name as having restored the place, feeling that if he did so, the memory of those who had created it, might possibly be wiped out. Indeed, the depth of his heart could not be compared with that of an ordinary person. Moreover, in restoring the garden he did not only think of bringing back the physical beauties. His Great-great-grandfather had been a high military official, of great literary ability. His way of living and his purity had brought forth a high degree of virtue and he incessantly cultivated his good qualities. During his life the light of his fame was great, and his name was known to high and low. In naming the garden Returned, Chiang thought of bringing back the qualities of his forbear. At the same time he took for himself the fancy name — 'Eulogize-Him-Who-Went-Before.'

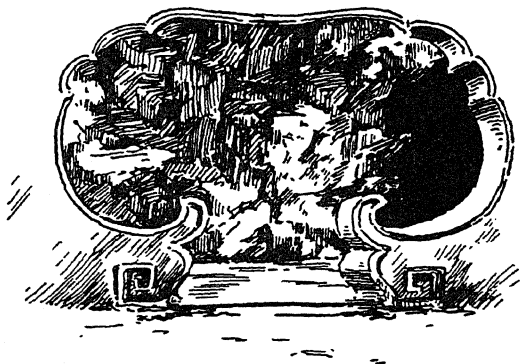
Once I myself visited the Returned Garden, in the heart of Soochow City. Arriving in the city, I left the Soochow railway station and followed the wide canal which forms the northern moat, ferried across to the Gate of the Extremity and walked down the street of endless industries; then turned sharply into a square courtyard which seemed completely filled by a giant wistaria. The age of that tree no man could tell with certainty, but the huge moss-grown trunk, coiling in dragon waves, might well have struck its roots a thousand years ago. The courtyard, however, is no longer a part of the Fu Yüan; to reach the Returned Garden, one must proceed down a narrow passage or alley-way, which runs between towering walls.

The garden is much smaller than it was in the days of its perfection and is sadly neglected now, but in the

clear metallic light of a spring day is very beautiful, and thoroughly typical of a garden as described by a young Chinese girl who was struggling through the mazes of English Composition under the guidance of a friend of mine.

This is what she wrote: 'A Chinese garden is what? There have many definitions can be said out. In one word it is the large assembly of many fine sceneries, such as lakes, mountains, bridges, birds sing, golden fishes, wild animals, ancient ruins, and so forth, with spectacular arbours built very adequately.' And so it is.

The object of its planning is to keep ever in man's heart a realization of his oneness with the Yin and Yang, and the great T'ai Chi — the Spirit of the Creator through which all things have their being.





## CHAPTER VI

### PICTURES OF TRAVEL

#### TRAVEL *(the Ruler speaks)*

In the prosperous days of Chou,  
We climbed its high hills.  
Climbed the undulating ranges, and the sharp peaks.  
We floated also on the placid rivers,  
And issued a proclamation to All-Below-Heaven,  
Thus does the Decree remain with Chou.

*Tu Fu: The Classic of Poetry*





## CHAPTER VI

### *Pictures of Travel*

#### I BREAST THE GREAT RIVER

THE green water understands my thoughts,  
For me it flows to the Northwest.  
Because of this, the sounds of my jade table-lute  
Will follow the flowing of its current and carry my grief to my friend.

LI T'AI-PO. Translation from *Fir-Flower Tablets*  
(Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell)

FROM the first, the rivers and canals of China were to me perhaps the most romantic features of that most romantic country. Millions of families live on them all their lives, scarcely knowing what it is to walk on the solid earth. In the three thousand years and more of Chinese history, poets and scholars have reverently explored their banks, walking in the footsteps of sages and artists who lived before them, 'seeking,' as the Chinese say, 'ancient traces.' All along their banks can be seen age-old pagodas and arches and tombs, built to commemorate the great men and women of the past, so that travelling on Chinese waterways is like journeying into far-off times, where the history of this old, old nation of the East is made manifest.

The three greatest rivers of China are: to the south, the Hsi Chiang, which becomes the Pearl River; to the north, the Hoang Ho, or Yellow River; and in the centre of the country, the Yangtze Kiang, or River of Golden Sand.

Of these the greatest and the first in interest is the Yangtze Kiang. It is sixth in size among the rivers of

the world. It flows from the mountains of Central Tibet, through the famous Three Chasms in a raging, gleaming torrent of most marvellous colour! It is like molten copper, or, as the Chinese say, 'red brass.' No wonder it is called the River of Golden Sand! Even at its mouth, near Shanghai, it drives its golden-copper-coloured water far out into the green sea, changing the name of the sea to the 'Yellow Sea'!

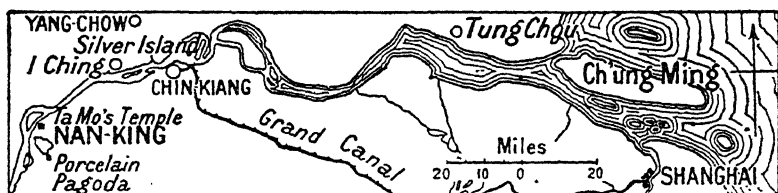
To speak more prosaically, the Yangtze Kiang brings down the red and yellow silt from Central Asia and deposits it on the coast, at the rate of a mile of rich land every sixty years. This is eagerly seized upon by the inhabitants of the Province, who for centuries have pushed forward their containing dykes as opportunity allowed, and have thus quickly transformed salt marshes into flourishing mulberry groves. The change is so rapid that in order to account for it the Chinese attribute the reclamation to the efforts of the Lady Ma Ku, a famous fairy, who is supposed to inhabit P'eng Lai, a fabulous Island in the Jade Grey Sea.

However that may be, it is certain that the fertile plains of Kiangsu and Chekiang are given to China by the Great River, just as the fertile plains of Egypt are given by the Nile. A world in the making is seen.

Interesting as it is to see this new world being built at such a rate, the evidences along the riverbanks of a world long past are still more romantic.

Hearing and reading of these wonders, I had long wished to see them for myself. So, accompanied by two friends, I started my first long river journey from Shanghai on May 18, 1922. We called ourselves the After-After-Wanderers. The name was suggested by

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, who exclaimed when he heard of the project: 'Love-Poetry-Mother will doubtless visit the Three-Wanderers-Cave near Ichang, so named because during the T'ang Dynasty the poet Po Chü-i, his brother, and a friend visited it; and during the Sung Dynasty the poet Su Tungpo, *his* brother, and a friend also went there. People speak of the first group as Before-Three-Wanderers and of the second group as After-Three-Wanderers. Now Love-Poetry-Mother and her friends will be the After-After-Three-Wanderers!'



One of the earliest European visitors to the Great River was the Italian Marco Polo, who came in A.D. 1275. Referring to I Ching, he wrote:

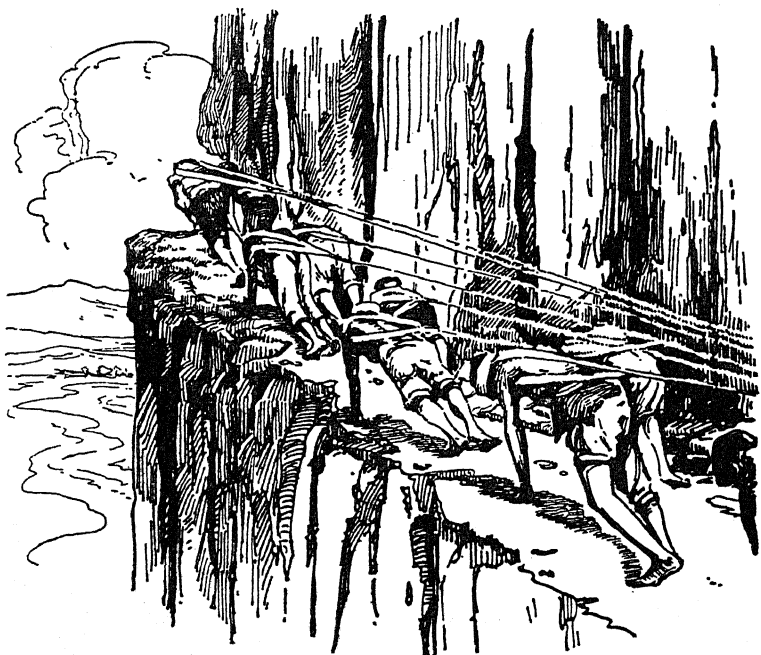
And you must know that this city stands on the greatest river in the world, the name of which is Kiang. It is in some places ten miles wide, in others eight, in others six, and it is more than one hundred days' journey in length from one end to the other. This it is that brings so much trade to the city we are speaking of; for on the waters of that river merchandise is perpetually coming and going, from and to the various parts of the world, enriching the city, and bringing a great revenue to the Great Khan.

And I assure you this river flows so far and traverses so many countries and cities that in good sooth there pass and repass on its waters a great number of vessels, and more wealth and merchandise than on all the rivers and all the

seas of Christendom put together! It seems indeed more like a Sea than a River.

After mentioning that he once beheld at that city fifteen thousand vessels at one time, Messer Marco Polo goes on:

You must know that the vessels on this river, in going upstream have to be tracked, for the current is so strong that they could not make head in any other manner. Now the



THE TRACKERS

tow-line, which is some three hundred paces in length, is made of nothing but cane. 'Tis in this way: they have those great canes of which I told you before that they are some fifteen paces in length; these they take and split from end to end (into many slender strips), and then they twist these

strips together so as to make a rope of any length they please. And the ropes so made are stronger than if they were made of hemp.

The great Italian is perfectly correct in regard to the bamboo hawsers used by boatmen up and down the river; they are of quite extraordinary strength.

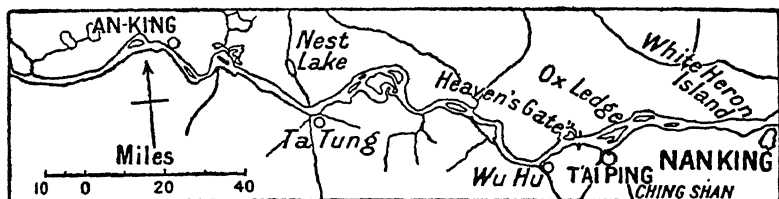
On the morning we approached Nanking, the sunrise was glorious. Lion Hill in a north angle of the battlemented wall was transformed into a veritable *chin ling* or Golden Mound. This was the name which the city once bore before the Ming rulers moved their Court to the District of Obedience to Heaven, which they proceeded to call Peking — North Capital; while the city they had left behind was referred to as Nanking — South Capital.

The northern city bore the name of Peking until 1927, when the Kuomintang Party established the capital of China at Nanking once more. Then the name Peking was changed to Peiping, which means Northern Peace.

As I leaned over the stern of the ship, a long procession of ghostly figures seemed to melt into the rapidly disappearing shadows, as though seeking refuge, in their natural habitat the World of Shade, from the blinding rays of a summer sun. Early rulers of China, famous beauties, poets, scholars, painters and musicians, students, farmers, and many, many soldiers made up the throng. Seven different dynasties have used the city as a capital and many royal tombs stand in the surrounding hills.

I know that there have been glorious and prosperous epochs in the history of Nanking, but I seem to have heard more about the sadness, the tragedies, and the

strifes that have taken place both within and without the walls. I suppose its position as the largest city on the lower reaches of the river is responsible for the fierce struggles which have literally torn it asunder. As an empty seashell held to the ear brings back the sound of surging waves, so the piteous ruins, the endless ancient footsteps in and about Nanking bring back thoughts of the centuries that have rolled by, and are mute reminders of human passions uncontrolled.



#### NEARING WU HU

The powerful tides of the Pacific Ocean traverse the China Sea and advance up the river for several hundred miles. T'ai P'ing, City-of-Great-Peace, is just above the Ox Ledge, and above it again are the Pillars which form Heaven's Gate. The western face of the East Pillar was very striking and looked as if it were powdered with freshly fallen snow. Again we trod an ancient footstep left by the poet Li T'ai-po:

#### THE HEAVEN'S GATE MOUNTAINS

In the far distance, the mountains seem to rise out of the river;  
Two peaks, standing opposite each other, make a natural  
gateway.

The cold colour of the pines is reflected between the river-  
banks,

Stones divide the current and shiver the wave-flowers to  
fragments.

Half an hour after steaming through Heaven's Gateway, we tied up at Wu Hu, Fertile Pool. It is well named. Grains and cereals of all sorts flow out from the rich country behind its gates, and of all exports the greatest is rice. Thousands and thousands of bushels float down the clear stream which connects Wu Hu with the interior of Anhwei Province. There is dry rice and water-grown rice; rice of the hills and rice of the plains. The Chinese call it 'white jade beads,' and say that it 'benefits the breath, removes anxiety and thirst, warms the viscera, harmonizes the gases of the stomach, and causes the growth of flesh!' The thin rice-water gruel with which they break their fast each morning is considered to 'strengthen the will, clarify the hearing, and brighten the eye,' but to us rice-water seems a singularly unstimulating beverage.

In China, men-who-work-with-their-hands-at-dawn, as farmers are called, are regarded as being of the utmost importance, ranking next only to scholars in the social scale; and nowhere can their well-tried methods be better studied than on either shore of the Great River. Beyond the reed banks stretch fertile fields, where blue-coated men and women tend their crops literally 'throughout the period of sun's light.' At dawn the first objects to be clearly distinguished are human figures in the fields, weeding, weeding, weeding; and when yellow dusk turns to darkness, those same figures melt away, still weeding, weeding, weeding.

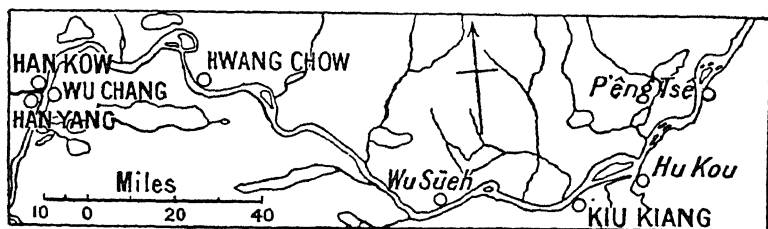
#### ON THE GREAT RIVER

I was sorry not to see the city of Anking, Peace-and-Blessings, which we passed before daylight. The great



seven-storied pagoda is one of the finest I know. A curious legend likens the city itself to a boat, with the pagoda as its mast. I believe that no official of the surname P'êng, a sail, or Chiang, an oar, is ever appointed to a post in Peace-and-Blessings, for fear that the 'boat,' were it fully equipped with means of propulsion, might set off down-river!

When I came on deck at nine o'clock, the curious rocky island known as Little Orphan rose sheer before us. It was very beautiful in the soft grey light, and the water was so still that the form of the island lay reflected on the surface. Hundreds of cormorants had assembled about its base and crest; the temples hidden among trees seemed very peaceful, and the eastern face, as we approached the rock, shone strangely white and pink.



Lovely as it was, I was more interested in P'êng Tsê, Marsh-of-Abundance, a little town on the right bank of the river. It is where T'ao Yüan-ming, or T'ao Whirlpool-of-Intelligence, served for a few short weeks in a minor official position.

He was born in the year of our Lord 365 in a village near Nine Rivers and soon became famous for his learning and talents. He was first appointed Literary Inspector of his native district, and then given the post of

Magistrate at Marsh-of-Abundance. He occupied this position barely eighty days, and resigned his seals in preference to bowing humbly before a petty official who arrived on a tour of inspection. His remark upon this occasion, that it was 'not worth while to crook the loins for the sake of five measures of rice,' has been admirably quoted ever since.

Whirlpool-of-Intelligence then retired to his native village and spent the rest of his life in poverty. It was a poverty illuminated, however, by the arts. He wrote poems and essays; his mastery of the table-lute was complete; and he spent much time in cultivating chrysanthemums. Five willow trees stood by his house and from them he took his fancy name, Five Willows Teacher.

The scenery above Nine Rivers is very fine; no wonder the poets love to describe it. Near Wusüeh, Ravine-of-Bravery, lie the earthly remains of General Yang whose spirit holds a position in the Ministry of Waters under the Dragon King. The Ministry is divided into two Departments. The officials of one control salt waters; of the other preside over fresh. Each of the four large rivers in China has a ruler, and General Yang's spirit has been appointed to govern the Yangtze Kiang. He is especially looked upon as protecting the immense rafts, some as large as half an acre in extent, which crawl downstream, and the men in charge of such rafts pay him special honour.

At sunset we drew near the narrow gorge of the Split Hill and passed through great fleets of winged junks sailing up-river. Su, of the Eastern Embankment, a Sung Dynasty poet, came here in a boat and, mistaking

the site, which is really farther up-river, wrote a long poem on the battle of the Red Wall.

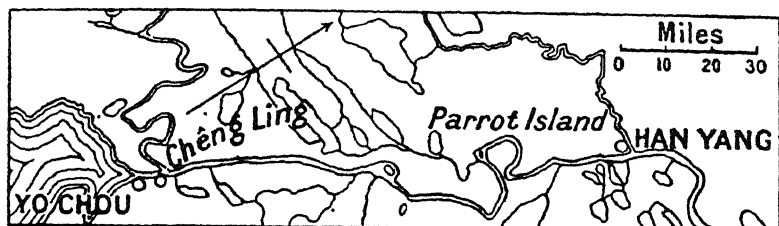
The battle was between the united forces of the rulers of Shu and Wu, and those of Ts'ao Ts'ao, ruler of Wei. Ts'ao Ts'ao was supposed to have eighty-three ten thousands of men and horses, also great ships joined together. He seemed invincible, but the famous Chu-Ko Liang 'called the East Wind to his aid,' and, as the ships of Ts'ao Ts'ao were driven westward, they were met by a murderous flight of flaming fire-arrows. These ignited the ships, which burned with so great a blaze that the reddened cliffs have never lost the colour they then took on.

We next approached the Collecting-Place of Nine Provinces, as Chinese call Hankow. It lies about six hundred miles from the sea at the farthest point navigable for large ships. We knew that we must transship on arrival, so did not linger too late in the soft darkness of the summer night, although the reach, where the dashing Mongol warrior Kublai Khan crossed the Yangtze with his troops when bent on the conquest of China, lay not far ahead.

The Three Cities situated at the junction of the Great River and one of its most important affluents, the Han, are Hanyang, Hankow, and Wuchang.

Hankow is, of course, the modern commercial mart, and is, one imagines, destined for a great future, but when the ancient footsteps which abound in both Hanyang and Wuchang were imprinted, it was a mere fishing village. Fishing is still an important industry, and salted fish are shipped in quantities from Hankow to Szechuen.

At Hanyang there is the Pomegranate Flower Terrace, where a young wife accused of poisoning her mother-in-law proved her innocence of the crime. As



she stood on the execution ground, when every hope of escape from the penalty imposed seemed gone, her eyes fell upon pomegranate flowers. They were scarlet, colour of hope and joy, of life itself, colour of the dress she, as a young woman, wore. Stepping forward, she snapped a twig from the tree and, bending over, planted it in the ground, saying, as she did so, 'I am guiltless. If my words are not false, may this branch strike roots and grow.' Those on the four sides, to use a Chinese idiom, stood breathless, the executioner with his great axe made no motion, and lo, before their startled eyes the little branch began to grow, and the scarlet blossoms opened wide in the summer sunlight.

Another famous site, that of the Table-Lute Terrace, lies on the shore of Moon Lake, where, in summer, the water is covered with pink and white lotus flowers. The story connected with it is told by the Chinese in great detail and is constantly referred to. Before the all-powerful First Emperor welded China into a homogeneous whole in 221 B.C., there lived a highly talented official named Po Ya. It so happened that he was once

stormbound in his travelling barge by the shore of Moon Lake.

Late at night the weather cleared, 'The dark ravine was full of the music of silence, the moon scattered bright shadows through the forest,' and Po Ya, who was a great musician, lighted the incense brazier and prepared to express, on the strings of his table-lute, his appreciation of the scene. Before, however, he had completed the first phrase, a string snapped with a sharp and strident sound, the infallible sign that some unauthorized listener is near.

The listener turned out to be a woodcutter who had sought shelter on the shore. He was a most unusual person especially gifted with a deep comprehension of music. Po Ya touched the strings of his table-lute and the woodcutter instantly interpreted the thoughts which prompted the strains. By midnight the two men had become so intimate, in spite of the differences in their worldly stations, that they performed the 'eight obeisances' by which brotherhood is sworn.

At dawn, Po Ya was obliged to continue his official journey, but the woodcutter could not be induced to leave his aged parents and accompany his new-made brother into the great world, so the brother promised to return on the fifteenth day of the following Eighth Moon, and meet his humble friend in the very same place.

He returned, but the woodcutter was not there to keep the tryst, so Po Ya, in order to attract his friend, unwrapped his table-lute from its silk cover and began to pluck the strings. To his surprise the sounds they emitted were soft and sad; they resembled a dirge. And it transpired that a dirge was only too appropriate.

The woodcutter had died, and lay under a freshly made grave.

Po Ya chanted a heart-broken lament in honour of his 'heart's-interpreter,' to the accompaniment of his table-lute. This ended, he took a knife from his girdle and cut the silk strings one by one. His tears fell fast upon the beloved instrument, but, lifting it high with both hands as though making a sacrificial offering, he cried, 'The music from my table-lute is ended'; and dashed it to pieces on the tomb at his feet.

As certain parts of the Great River above Hankow are very shallow, we took for this portion of the journey a steamer of lighter draught, which sailed from Hankow late at night. We passed, during the hours of darkness, the actual scene of the battle where Ts'ao Ts'ao's ships were annihilated, and where a red cliff remains to tell the tale.

The fish-traps along the shore were very interesting and new to me. It appears that in April, when spawn is floating on the water, the fishermen go out and collect it. They hatch out the tiny fish in these curious traps, and, when a sufficient number are ready, hawk them about the country in jars. The country people buy them in order to stock the ponds and inland waters.

We also met some gigantic rafts of bamboos and poles which were being propelled in a strange manner. In addition to the huge sweeps in front, they had a windlass on the after part. A boat in attendance carried a big fan-shaped sea-anchor or water-sail in front of the raft, and plunged it upright into the water. The raft was then drawn up to the water-sail by means of a thick

bamboo hawser which was wound round and round the windlass. The attendant boat then lifted the fan-shaped device from the water, hurried forward with it, and plunged it into the river again, and the performance of warping the raft up to it was repeated. This went on *ad infinitum*.

Other local curiosities were the perfectly round lime kilns bound with bamboo ropes. They are built in even tiers and the stones between the bands of rope are so placed that the air draws through them. The kilns are filled with fuel which is so arranged as to burn slowly. The bamboo rope is not hurt by the heat and is used for a second kiln, and sometimes a third.

After dark a drizzle began, and when we reached Ch'êng Ling, the port for Yochow, it was raining 'as though a tub were overturned,' which is the expression used by the Chinese when we would say 'it is raining in bucketfuls.'

We were then most fortunate. We did not push on from Ch'êng Ling as ships usually do. The captain received instructions to take on a cargo of rice; we therefore turned from our course and ran up to Yochow, High-Peak Islet, reaching there quite early in the morning. I should have remained unconscious of our movements had not Number Two Boy, who usually travels with me, hurried into the cabin, saying, 'Mississee! *ku chi* [ancient footstep] have got.' I hastily rose and looked through the porthole directly upon the Yo Yang Lou, Bright Tower of the High-Peak. It is a very famous footstep. With one of the After-After-Three-Wanderers I hurried ashore.

High-Peak Islet stands at the entrance to the largest lake in China, the far-famed Tung T'ing; it is therefore the water-gate to Hunan, South-of-the-Lake Province, and the vast region beyond. It is constantly referred to by poets, who are always longing to 'float upon its waters':

He is going to the Tung T'ing Lake,  
My friend whom I have loved so many years.  
The Spring wind startles the willows  
And they break into pale leaf.  
I go with my friend  
As far as the river-bank.  
And my mind is full and overflowing  
With the things I did not say.

So runs the poem on a Written Picture, which hangs in my room.

The pavilions which compose the Bright Tower are built over the west gate of High-Peak and command a wonderful view. Broad stone steps lead from the river-bank to the archway forming the city gate, and directly above this is placed the largest of three pavilions. It faces the setting sun, and is roofed with glittering yellow and green tiles; the green cleverly grouped in the centre of the yellow in the shape of a huge swastika. Small pavilions stand to the north and to the south, and the southern has a glorious roof of true delphinium blue.

Chang Yüeh, a statesman and scholar of the T'ang Dynasty who lived A.D. 667-730, built the original Bright Tower, but it has been rebuilt and repaired many times since.

The stretch of country between Tung T'ing Lake and Furze Gate, which is where the foothills of the Tibetan



Plateau begin, is perfectly flat and no higher than the level of the sea. It may seem monotonous, but, as Li T'ai-po says, 'From old days until now, people who can really see with their eyes are few,' and in reality it is one of the most interesting parts of the whole stream. Here the world is in the making.



PAVILION WITH BLUE ROOF

The Great River, having cut through mountain ranges and swept aside all obstructions in the high country, proceeds to meander through the Hupeh Plain in what seems an inconsequent manner.

The channel is ever-changing: so much so that at Sunday Island, which the Chinese call Brought-Forth-by-Heaven Island — and which is really no island at

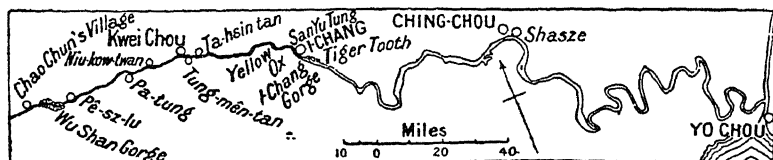
all, but a series of shifting flats — boats have to be stationed continually to mark its vagaries from hour to hour.

Although the distance, as the crow flies, between High-Peak Islet and Sunday Island is only forty-eight miles, the boat steamed over a hundred. She seemed to be perpetually going round in circles, and a solitary hill, which appeared off our port bow at one moment, in a short time was directly starboard.

The country is intersected with dykes, built in what is often a vain attempt to hold back the frequent floods. It is not surprising that the people appeal also to the denizens of other worlds for help. Just above Sunday Island, on the left bank of the river, is a huge, bronze, single-horned beast, placed there, I believe, about two centuries ago. It sits firmly on its haunches gazing up-river, and certainly looks quite prepared to swallow any stream in flood; which is what it is supposed to do!

Water-flowers, as the rosettes of foam formed by swirling currents are called by the Chinese, floated past us rapidly on the highly coloured water. In regard to this colour, which in the upper reaches of the river is so extraordinary, I have often been accused of exaggeration. I therefore quote a passage from what is probably the most literal book in the world. I mean the 'Yangtze Kiang Pilot,' issued by the British Admiralty in 1914: 'The colour of the water, even in winter, is far from clear, whilst in summer it is tinted with red, brown, yellow, and occasionally purple hues.' It is impossible to describe the effect this colouration makes in the changing lights from sunrise to sunset; it was impressive even in the yellow dusk.

We spent the whole day winding through the plain, which sometimes lay twenty feet below the river level. The channel was often marked by bamboos on either side, and we obeyed the unwritten law of navigation by which ascending boats hug the steep bank, and allow those descending to float down the centre of the channel on the breast of the current.



Fifty miles or so west of Sand Market, foothills began to appear, and suddenly the sheer wall of Tiger's Teeth Gorge cut the foreground — it is the first hint of limitless force. So perpendicular are its cliffs that boats cannot advance by tracking and must ascend by help of oars when there is no wind to help them; but strangely enough, a fairly strong wind does as a rule draw from the southeast, from noon to sunset all the year round.

Above the little gorge, which is only two miles long, we steamed into the reach below the city of Ichang, Righteous Prosperity, where we dropped anchor in the middle of the afternoon.

Righteous Prosperity lies at the foot of the Three Chasms and is the point where modern travellers tranship for the up-river journey in specially constructed steamers. Machinery is not my strong point, but I do know that these boats are very powerful, indeed, and that they are provided with three rudders in case of emergencies. I also know that steaming through the



THE HOUSES PERCHED ON STILTS

Yangtze Gorges is no child's play, but a serious undertaking.

A few Europeans live in Ichang, as it is a treaty port, and the Chinese city is large, and so rich that it has been looted many times in the troubled days of latter years. It was the first typically up-river city I had ever seen, and the houses perched on stilts in preparation for the high water of summer are very curious. The thoroughly modern quay abreast of our berth is forty-seven-odd feet above the zero of the river gauge, and on a level with the hot-season rise.

The day after our arrival, we, the After-After-Three-Wanderers, visited the Three Wanderers' Cave. The Chinese guidebook—'Triumphantly Famous Ancient Footsteps Widely Observed,' is its full title—I think I shall simply speak of it as the 'Guide'—gives quite a full account of the cave:

To the N.W. of the city, Ichang, lies the San Yu T'ung, Three Wanderers' Cave. The interior is three *chien* large. The entrance allows only one person to pass at a time. Inside there are stalactites which extend from the top to the bottom like bamboos. In the time of the T'ang Dynasty Po Chü-i, with his younger brother Po Chih-tui and Yüan Chên, paid it a visit, and all wrote poems about it. During the Sung Dynasty Ou Yang-hsiu, Su Tung-po, and his younger brother came and also wrote poems. The Ichang people call the first group Before-Three-Wanderers, and the second, After-Three-Wanderers.

It was a delightful afternoon, the water in the glen to which we had come in a tiny boat was clear and pure, the hillsides were jade-green, and the cave itself was thrilling. The characters on the entrance arch read, 'Hills and Water Clear and Harmonious.' True enough.

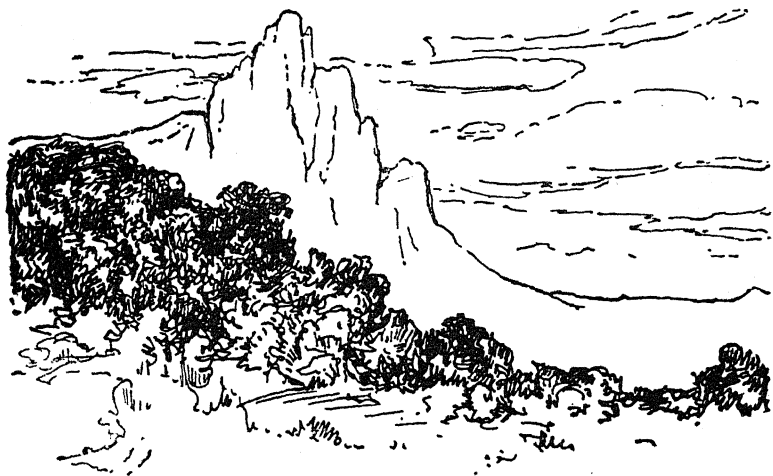
The names of three Europeans, Anglo-Saxons, are written on the ceiling of the cave: J. H. Grayson, T. Liddell, I. Duff, 1849! Who were *these* Three Wanderers and where did they come from in those early days of Western intercourse?

Then we walked over the hill. The sun was low enough to blaze with light, and as we watched, a tiny dot suddenly appeared in that vast Gateway to the West: the *Mei Rên*, our boat, on her downward journey slid through before our eyes. By the time we reached the bottom of the hill, she had covered the distance in the Gorge and throbbed past, giving us her terrible 'wash.' It was quite unnecessary to adjure our boatman, as we did, '*Hsiao hsin!*' '*Hsiao hsin!*'!! 'Little heart!' 'Little heart!' the Chinese idiom for 'Take care!'

Two days later, we started on our journey up the Gorges. If any doubts existed as to the seriousness of navigation on the upper reaches of the River of Golden Sand, one glance at the faces of those on the bridge of the steamer would have dispelled them forever! The enormous bulk of the captain filled the centre: at one end, the chief officer, slim and grave — his first journey; on the port side the pilot, his face the colour of Ming ivory, impassive, immobile. He was practically motionless, with the exception of the directions he gave with his right forefinger. In the background three helmsmen.

No one spoke. The only sounds were those of the rushing, swirling, eddying water, of the panting engines, or the sharp call of the engine-room bell in answer to a signal from that dark forefinger.

Up, up, through the Ichang Gorge. The light became less grim, mists rose, fell, lifted, and slipped behind the



THE YELLOW OX

peaks; through the Great Gate on and on we throbbed until the Yellow Ox stood before us.

Three dawns shine upon the Yellow Ox.  
 Three sunsets — and we go so slowly.  
 Three dawns — again three sunsets —  
 And we do not notice that our hair is white as silk.

So wrote Li T'ai-po about twelve centuries ago; even today our progress was not rapid.

Soon we reached the Deer's Horn Rocks, the Upper and the Lower. Tu Fu wrote:

When we passed the Deer's Horn Rocks, we were assuredly  
 passing through danger.  
 When traversing the Wolf's Head it was as though we trod  
 on his dewlap.  
 How is it possible not to change colour when crossing the evil  
 rapids?

To sleep on the high pillow would show that one was unduly  
 confident, and regarded one's person as but trivial.

Books of poems and histories were all over-turned and thrown into disorder;  
Of things packed into bags — half were wet, and crushed;  
On the precipice of life, we looked down giddy and anxious;  
At any instant we might be in a desperate situation.

The Deer's Horns are surely very 'evil' places at certain stages of the water!

The river narrowed again, the hillsides in their newly washed beauty were close to us, and the cascades caused by the excessive rain made a most extraordinary effect. Each one was filled to its utmost, and the colours were more astounding than can be described. Deep red, pale red; deep copper, pale copper; straw colour and bright gold; streams of jewels flowing down the rocks.

The passage became narrower and still narrower until we entered the Gorge of the Military Code and Precious Blade, commonly known after its upper exit as *Mi T'an*. We knew that the famous Three Chasms were near, and waited breathlessly. As we waited, there came a really thrilling moment when we met another steamer in that terribly narrow passage of the Fire and Smoke Rocks. For a tense moment the captain stood with his hand on the signal cord; the pilot implored him to do — I don't know what; he was perfectly still until his mind was made up, then blew two blasts, and we practically stood still below the rocks, while the other boat slid swiftly past. Of this place it is said, 'The water rushing past can be heard several *li*.'

#### THE SORCERESS GORGE

The entrance to Wu Hsia, the Sorceress Gorge, first of the famous 'Three,' was gloomy and awe-inspiring;





IN THE THREE CHASMS

it began to rain heavily; the soil was ruby red; the trees deep tropical blue-green; the Great River itself kept its unique exquisite shade — that indescribable rosy copper, a gift from the sands of Tibet.

At the upper mouth of the Sorceress Gorge is a conical hill fifteen hundred feet in height, and in the ravine above it is a spot full of romantic interest. It is the village where the lovely daughter of the Wang Clan was born and brought up.

Wang Ch'iang, known to posterity as Chao Chün, the Brilliant-and-Perfect, lived in the first century before Christ. The daughter of educated parents, she was brought up in the strictest Confucian principles; in the words of the Chinese, she 'did not speak loudly nor did she look beyond the doors; indeed, even within the house, she only walked the path which led to her mother's room. Her ears were closed to all distracting sounds, therefore her heart and mind were pure like those of the Immortals.' Her father regarded her as a precious jewel, and, although many suitors presented themselves, he refused to listen to their proposals, and finally, when she was seventeen, sent her to the capital as an offering to the Han Emperor Yüan Ti.

Upon arriving at the palace, the young girl was housed in the inner rooms, among the innumerable palace women who lived there in constant hope of a summons to the Imperial presence. As the Son of Heaven never went into this part of his palace, it was customary to catalogue the inmates and submit their portraits to him, a form of procedure which led to much bribery of the Court painters. The rigid principles of the daughter of the Wang Clan forbade her to comply with this palace

custom, and the portrait which appeared in the catalogue was such a travesty of her exquisite features that it roused no desire in the Imperial breast.

Five or six dreary years passed, and the young girl remained secluded in the Women's Apartments. Soon after, the head of a Hsiung Nu tribe sent to ask that one of Yüan Ti's ladies be bestowed upon him as Queen. The catalogue was consulted, and the decision fell upon the daughter of Wang as being the one among the palace women who had the fewest charms. She was therefore told to prepare herself for a journey to the desert wastes, where she would reign over a savage Central Asian tribe, a prospect terrifying to one brought up in strict seclusion among people of refinement.

Custom demanded that, on the point of departure, she should appear before the Son of Heaven in order to thank her Imperial Master for his kind thoughtfulness in thus providing for her future, and then be formally handed over to the envoys. The audience was held in one of the secondary halls, the Court was assembled, the envoys stood ready, and the lady entered. At the sight of her unusual beauty, everyone was thunderstruck; even the Emperor could hardly refrain from springing off the Dragon Throne and speaking to her. But it was too late; there was nothing to be done. The most beautiful of all the palace women was pledged to the Hsiung Nu Khan; the escort which was to convey her through the Jade Pass waited; and soon the broken-hearted girl set off.

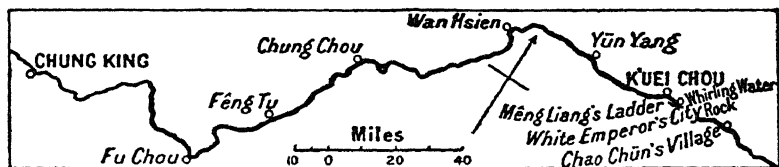
Fury and consternation spread through the palace; a camel laden with gold was sent in pursuit; the guilty painter was executed, and his immense fortune was sent

as a consolation to the Wang family; but all this could not save the girl from her fate. The Hsiung Nu ambassador refused to ransom her, and she passed out through the Jade Barrier to the 'Yellow Sand Fields' beyond.

The banished daughter of Han was true to the principles in which she had been schooled. Instead of committing suicide, as she longed to do, she submitted to the will of the Five Great Ones — Heaven, Earth, the Emperor, her Father, and her Mother — and, in spite of the homesickness from which she suffered perpetually, performed her duties as a wife to the best of her ability.

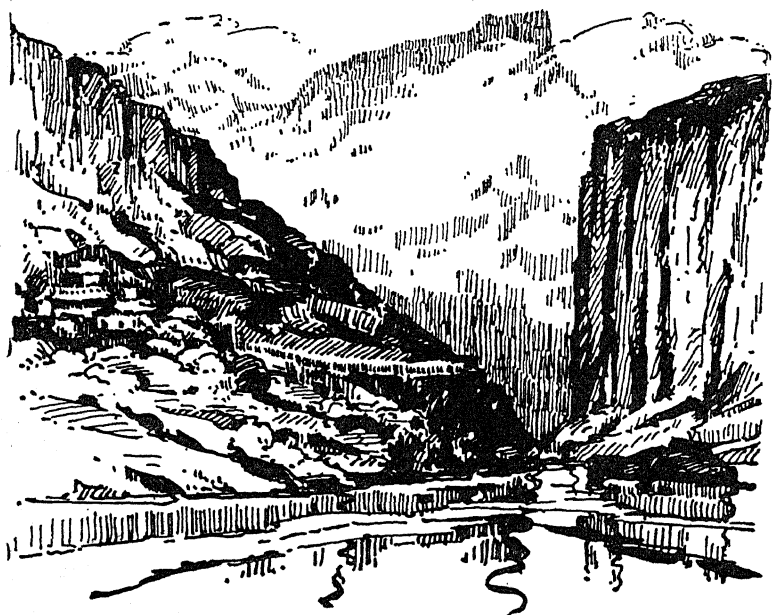
Upon the death of the Khan, she felt that her hour of deliverance had at last come and that she was at liberty to poison herself; so this she did. She was buried in the desert, but the mound over her grave remained — so the legend says — always green.

When the poet Tu Fu passed this spot, he fancied that he heard the sound of Chao Chün's ghostly *pi-pa* — a musical instrument somewhat like a guitar — and he wrote a poem about her.



The stretch of the Chü T'ang Gorge, literally Chasm of the Terrifying Embankment, is intensely dramatic. It is but four miles in length, and its cliffs rise sheer for seven hundred feet on either bank. It forms a Heaven-made Danger for the protection of Szechuen, and is well called the Water Barrier.

At the upper end Mêng Liang's Ladder is pointed out; it is composed of holes in the rock fourteen inches square and two feet deep, in which this brave general is supposed to have placed posts so that his men could scale the cliff.



MÈNG LIANG'S LADDER

The reason Mêng Liang was obliged to scale the cliff was that at night, and in times of danger, a chain was stretched across the river and securely fastened. The iron pillars which held it can still be seen, and I have heard that the chain itself lies in a cave below the White Emperor's City which stood on the promontory opposite Mêng Liang's Ladder.

The city was built by the redoubtable Kung-sun Shu,

who, in A.D. 25, tore Szechuen from the Emperor Kuang Wu of Han, and established a kingdom here. While construction was in progress, a white dragon is supposed to have appeared to him from a well, so he chose white as his colour and gave his city this name.

In addition to the chain, a man-made protection, there is a remarkable rock placed by Heaven, as though it were a sentinel.

This is the Yen Yü Tui, Whirling Water Rock, called by Europeans, for some unexplained reason, the Goose Tail. At low water it towers out of the river-bed to a height of nearly a hundred feet. At the top of high water it is often covered, and then the District Magistrate forbids junks to travel. It is referred to by poets again and again. The boatmen say: 'When the Yen Yü looks like a horse, the Chü T'ang cannot be descended. When the Yen Yü is like an elephant, the Chü T'ang cannot be ascended!'

Not far above Clouded Sun City we reached the New Dragon Rapid which has existed only since 1896, when, after forty days of incessant rain, a bad landslip occurred on the left bank of the river. At this season the Dragon is comparatively harmless, but at low water he is appallingly fierce and special pilots assist boats to circumvent his vagaries.

As a rule, steamers stop for only an hour or so at Wan Hsien, Ten Thousands District, then push on to Fu Chou, where they anchor for the night; but the captain of Beauty and Benevolence had orders to remain overnight at Wan Hsien, so we were able to see one or two of the many ancient footsteps.

Ten Thousands District is intimately connected with

Li T'ai-po, who studied here in his youth and whose memory is still very green. In a deep niche in the cliffs which tower above Wan Hsien, the poet sits in effigy, freshly gilt, looking with a quizzical smile down the bend of the copper-coloured river. An attendant on either hand stands ready to serve him with wine, one youth holding a flagon, the other a wine-cup. The precipice where he spent much time reading, writing, and playing hedged-in checkers, is high above the town. We toiled to the very summit. Number Two Boy remarked patiently this evening, 'We have traversed four thousand steps of stairs.' I did not doubt his word.

By half-past four next morning, we pushed on up-river. The lights were exquisite and a soft haze added depth to the view which was no longer overpowering. We had left the Chasms far behind, and hilly slopes took the place of precipices.

Four or five hours after leaving Wan Hsien, we came to the amazing pile called Shih Pao Chai, Precious Stone Castle. The great rock rises perpendicularly from a platform which itself is of no mean height. The whole pile stands about three hundred feet above the river and is surmounted by a Buddhist monastery, which they tell me has suffered greatly during the last few years of fighting.

A charming legend, analogous to our tale of the goose with the golden egg, is told of Shih Pao Chai. It seems that at some date, unspecified, a miraculous stream of rice from a crevice in the cliff supplied the priests with sufficient food for their daily needs. In the dead of night an avaricious soul sought to increase the supply by the simple means of enlarging the hole through which



PRECIOUS STONE CASTLE



it came. But little imagination is required to guess the result — rice ceased to flow!

The day became more and more brilliant, the water shone with a deeper and more marvellous colour as each hour went by, and when we arrived at Fêng Tu in the middle of the afternoon, the world seemed dipped in gold.

Fêng Tu, Abundant Capital, is one of the most famous places in China, because it is supposed to be the principal entrance to the World of Shade, where spirits of the dead sojourn. In the temple on the top of the hill which rises from the river-bank is a sort of well-head said to lead directly to the palace of King Yen-lo, sovereign of the dark regions.

A passport for the journey thither can be bought for quite a trivial sum. A story told me in regard to Fêng Tu is rather amusing. My informant said that it had been customary for every official, when taking up his post in the district, to descend the curious aperture, which, by the by, remains unexplained, and pay his respects to the ruler below.

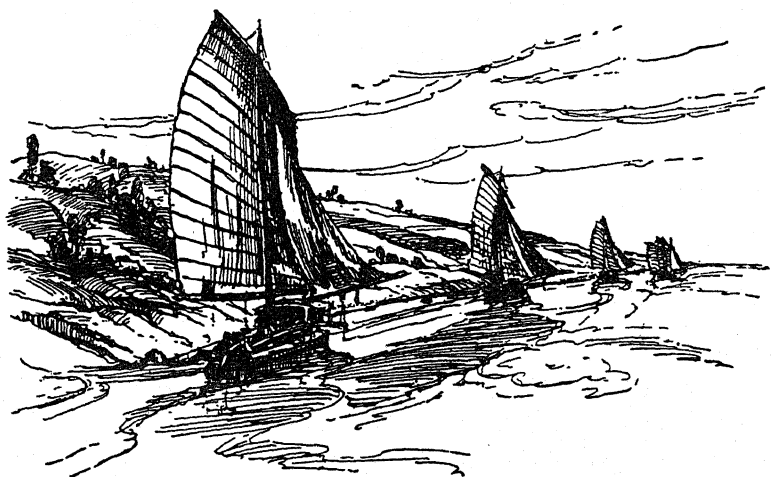
‘Only those officials who were perfectly sincere and upright could return’ — the story-teller paused for a moment, then added, ‘It was found necessary to close the well-head.’

Before reaching Fu Chou, where we were to tie up for the night, I noticed a most extraordinary effect in the colour of the river. Pools of jade-green and bluish water seemed to be mixed with the copper and red to which our eyes had become accustomed. I found that this is no unusual phenomenon. The Crow River, which joins the stream at Fu Chou, brings down its pellucid burden

with such impetus that the waters do not merge for quite a long time.

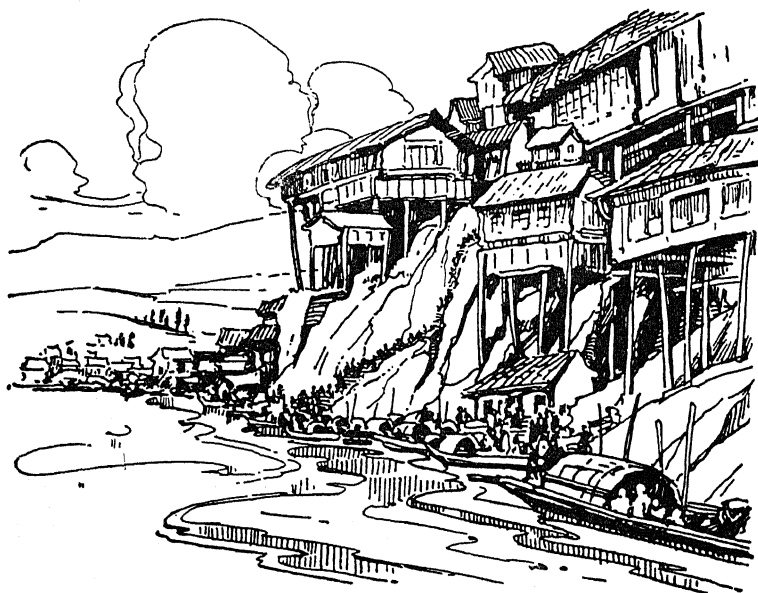
This Crow River must be very curious. The turns are so abrupt and the rapids so swift that in descending the current it is necessary to use specially constructed boats with twisted sterns. They are very peculiar in appearance and look as if the after deck of an ordinary Chinese junk had been given a sharp turn upwards, so that the stern deck had become perpendicular. This straight-faced deck has rungs to enable a man to climb up, if he needs to do so. The boats have no rudders, but are steered by a colossal sweep which is worked from a bridge in the middle of the vessel. Salt, travelling from the Province of Four Streams to the southwest, is carried by this turbulent waterway.

The distance between Fu Chou and Chungking is not so very great, and the stream runs, generally speaking, between gentle slopes.



LARGE FLOTILLAS OF JUNKS

We passed several large flotillas of junks being drawn up-river by gangs of trackers, men harnessed to a great bamboo hawser which leads from the masthead. Sails were set, both mainsails and spinnakers, and billowed



CHUNGKING — IMPORTANT BLESSINGS

full with a strong southerly wind, and immense sweeps jutted out from the bows of the boats. At high-water season comparatively few junks travel, so we have seen but little of the marvellous manipulation of which trackers are capable.

The sun was directly overhead when we reached Chungking. The name means Important Blessings — the characters might also be translated as Hearty Congratulations. Whether or not their choice had anything

to do with gratitude on safe arrival at a journey's end, I do not know.

In any case the city, standing on a rocky promontory between the Great River and a very important tributary called the Chia Ling, is a most extraordinary place. Seventeen gates pierce the crenellated walls, and flights of stone steps rise over a hundred feet from the foreshore to the gates which face the rivers. As the entire water supply must be carried up these steps, and as an immense amount of cargo must also go up and down, the traffic can be better imagined than described. I really felt as though every human being in the Province of Four Rivers must have come to meet us! — and yet we had left a few behind us by the way.

One incident, however, stands out clearly against this confused background. As we walked in the Garden of Righteousness high on the hill, we met an old man carrying a table-lute. As is customary in China, he greeted us courteously, and we conversed. He said that an official had invited him to the evening meal and that later they would have music in the garden. I expressed my delight in such music and he offered to play for us, but said that we must find a suitable place to sit and listen.

He led the way around the brow of a little hill to a deep cave in the hillside, in which were placed a stone table and garden seats. Drawing his table-lute from its soft green-and-gold brocade cover, he placed it on the table and played a soft and plaintive air. I think that it must have been of hills and water; possibly he thought of those which lay before us in the golden sunset light. After a little while, the music ceased, and the musician took his leave with all the elaborate phrases cultivated

people use; but we remained in that strange cave looking down upon the glittering plain until the slanting shadows warned us that our ascent of the Great River was over and that we must go.

#### I VISIT THE PURPLE FORBIDDEN CITY

Like a saint, he comes,  
 The Most Noble.  
 In his lacquered state chariot  
 He awes the hundred living things.  
 He is clouded with the purple smoke of incense,  
 A round umbrella  
 Protects the Son of Heaven.  
 Exquisite is the beauty  
 Of the two-edged swords,  
 Of the chariots,  
 Of the star-embroidered shoe of the attendants.  
 The Sun and Moon fans are borne before him,  
 And he is preceded by sharp spears  
 And the blowing brightness of innumerable flags.  
 The Spring wind proclaims the Emperor's return,  
 Binding the ten thousand districts together  
 In a chorded harmony of Peace and Satisfaction,  
 So that the white-haired old men and the multitudes  
       rejoice,  
 And I wish to add my ode  
 In praise of perfect peace.

WÊN CHÊNG-MING

Translation from *Fir-Flower Tablets*  
 (Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell)

The Capital of China was formerly Peking, called, since the Revolution, Peiping. Here, surrounded by his Court, the Chinese Emperor lived undisturbed by intruders from the outer world. His palace was called the 'Purple Forbidden City,' and although, in the days of

the Empire, I had walked past it, had gazed at it, and had lain at night listening to the noise of the carts when the officials had assembled for the Dawn Audience, I had been unable to enter.

The establishment of the Republic changed all that, and I then went North with a new idea. I would see the Forbidden City and I would try to understand it! Had I not built the Grass Hut? Did I not know that Chinese buildings were all planned with a deep sense of symbolism? Was it not a foregone conclusion that the Emperor's dwelling, being so much larger and finer than any other in China — or in the wide world for the matter of that — must be surrounded with even more symbolism? The answer to each one of these questions was 'Yes.'

Before going North, I determined to try, with the help of Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos, to unravel the tangled skein of symbolism which binds into a united whole the collection of single buildings forming the palace city of former Chinese rulers. And I knew that, if I could unravel that tangled skein, I should have a greater insight into the minds and the belief of this great people in whom I was so deeply interested. But it was no easy task. Volumes and volumes in European languages have been written about Peking; yet in not a single one did I find a hint that such symbolism existed.

Perhaps this is quite natural. When most of the books I refer to were written, the Purple City was absolutely 'forbidden'; no unauthorized footstep could be imprinted within its gates; and except for a comparatively short time during the Boxer rising, this has been the case until quite lately.

During the brief period I mention, when in 1900 the Allied troops entered Peking and the Son of Heaven took refuge in Sianfu, the deserted halls and courtyards were first seen by profane eyes. Then it was that the Japanese, realizing the importance of what was laid bare, took a wonderful series of photographs, showing an immense number of the buildings and the decorative details of the Purple Forbidden City. These were subsequently published and form a most valuable record.

This Japanese publication formed the background of my study. Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos and I arranged the pictures in a sequence, which showed the gates and halls in proper order as they lead from the southern to the northern entrances of the city. We took note of arrangement, of decorations, and fortunately took special note of inscriptions.

I say fortunately because, when in 1900 the Court fled hastily to the West, everything was left in place. The photographs are complete. But when, after the Republic was set up in 1912, the ceremonial halls were thrown open to visitors, the thrones were removed, as were also the horizontal boards bearing inscriptions which had previously hung over them.

The photographs, as I say, formed a background to my study of the Purple Forbidden City, but the foreground had to be supplied from many sources. And in order to understand the symbolism in the most rudimentary manner, four important manifestations of Chinese culture had to be kept constantly in mind.

I refer to Chinese philosophy; to the Chinese idea of kinship; to the cult of the Worship of Heaven; and to

the extraordinary educational system by means of which the social structure of China has been raised.

#### THE OUTLINES OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

It is impossible to think of Chinese philosophy without thinking first of the Great Teacher, who, five hundred years before our era, consolidated the ideas of earlier days and set them forth in the classical works which the Chinese regard as we regard the Bible.

The surname of the Great Teacher was K'ung, and the Chinese speak of him as K'ung fû tzû, or K'ung, 'honourable philosopher.' Now this term was translated by the early Jesuit missionaries as Confucius. The Great Teacher of China is, therefore, known throughout the Western world by that name.

The same transformation took place in the name of his most famous disciple who lived three centuries later, and whose surname was Mêng. Mêng fû tzû, as the Chinese call him, became for us Mencius.

Confucius was born and is buried in what is now the Province of Shantung. His descendants to the seventy-sixth generation still live a stone's throw from the big enclosure which surrounds his tomb, and which is filled with graves where lie innumerable members of the K'ung Clan. Some years ago I visited this tomb in the city of Ch'ü Fu and was received by the seventy-fifth Duke of K'ung, who has since died. This representative of the only family in China which has held an hereditary title was very tall and quite impressive.

Although he was born and died in Ch'ü Fu, Confucius spent his life travelling from one feudal Court to another, trying to reform the various rulers — a very



thankless task. Finally he returned to Ch'ü Fu and passed the sunset of his life surrounded by faithful students. Later ages heaped honours upon the memory of Confucius and his memorial temples stood in every city of the Empire. The one in Peiping is among the most beautiful I know.

To return, however, to his teachings. The diagram which you see here may seem at first glance very complicated to you, but it gives an excellent idea of the philosophy of Confucius and I think I can explain it to you. It is a diagram which is engraved on the tombstone of a famous Confucian scholar, and is important because it was upon these ideas that the structure of Chinese society has been raised.

In the centre of the upper circle, we see the Creator, called by the Chinese *Shang Ti*. In the centre of the lower circle is what the Chinese call the vital essence — which is, quite simply, that which sets everything in the Universe in motion and which is supposed to come from *Shang Ti*.

If you ever have occasion to read more of Chinese philosophy, this representation of *T'ai Chi*, the Ultimate Principle, will be quite clear to you. *T'ai Chi* produces the two great Essences, *Yang* and *Yin*. *Yang*, shown by the light half of the circle, represents the active principle in life, and *Yin*, the passive. *Yang* and *Yin* are supposed to balance each other perfectly and through this counterbalance to produce the Three Powers, which are Heaven, Earth, and Man. The lower half of the circle has two subdivisions. In one appears the *Shen*, or Spirits of Nature, such as the spirits of hills, rivers, and so on. And in the other is the *Sheng*, or enlightened men.

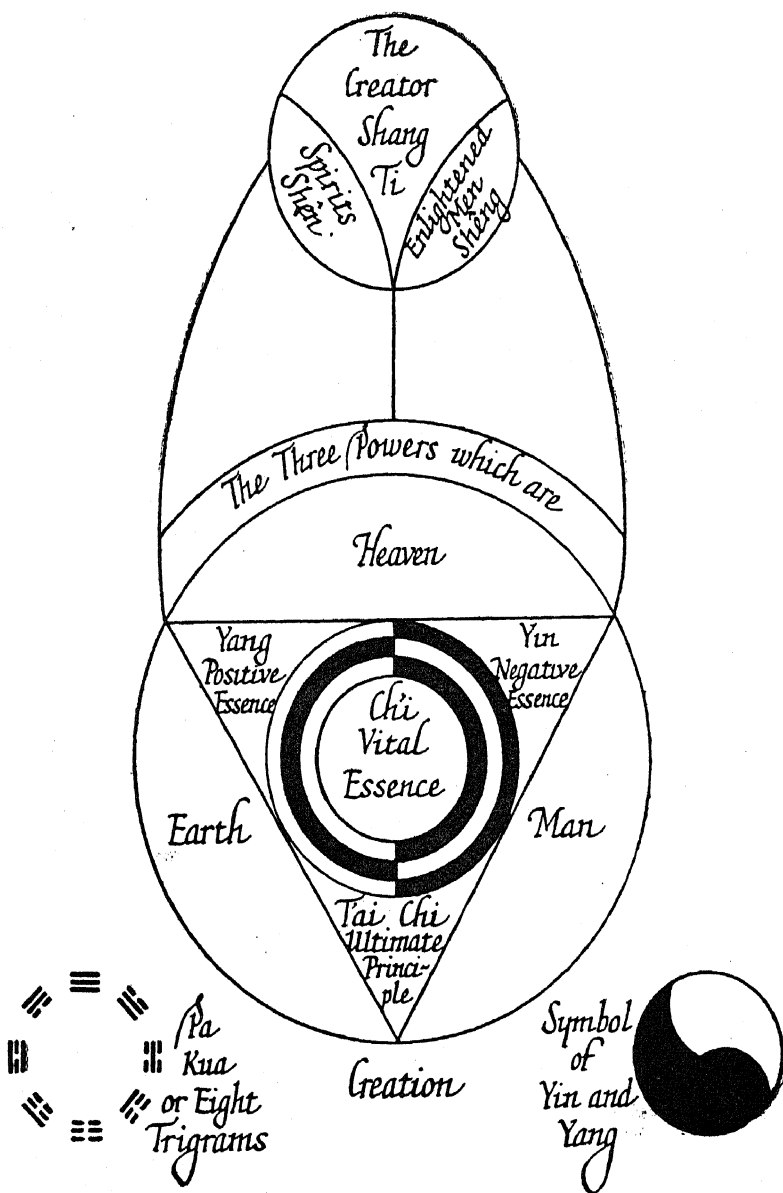


DIAGRAM EXPLAINING CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

But do not be bewildered by these terms. It is all simplified in the fundamental Chinese belief that that which makes men good, which makes them human, indeed, and not just animal, is the fact that they are endowed with the spirit of the Creator. The Chinese believe, too, that this spirit in man is developed by training and education.

This is a very interesting point. The Chinese believe that human beings are ranged in different classes as they are more or less imbued with the spirit of the Creator. Mencius speaks very clearly on the subject, as is recorded in his conversation with a certain Hao-shêng who questioned him, saying, 'What sort of a man is Yo-chêng?'

Mencius replied, 'He is a good man; a man whose words are sincere.'

#### THE CHINESE IDEA OF KINGSHIP

The human interpreter of this philosophy was supposed to be the Chinese Emperor, the Son of Heaven, ruler of All-Below-the-Sky as the Chinese call the world.

No ordinary man, of course, could be expected to fill so great an office. Therefore, each Emperor was expected to choose as his successor a man of outstanding intelligence and integrity. The test of an Emperor's integrity was whether or not there were peace and prosperity under his rule. He ascended the throne by the will of the people and by the 'Decree of Heaven.'

The first Chinese Emperor spoken of in the Classical Writings is reported to have come to the throne in 2357 B.C. This was the Emperor Yao, about whom there are many legends and whose successors have taken

office ever since in strict accordance with his principle of choice. His immediate follower was the Emperor Shun. We read of a discussion between Mencius, who lived more than fifteen hundred years later, and one of his disciples, a certain Ten Thousand Essays, on this point of succession.

Ten-Thousand Essays spoke, saying, 'Shun received All-Below-the-Sky from Yao; is this not so?'

Mencius replied, 'Not so; the Son of Heaven cannot give All-Below-the-Sky to any man.'

Ten-Thousand Essays then asked, 'But, nevertheless, Shun obtained All-Below-the-Sky. Through whom did he obtain it?'

'It came from Heaven,' said Mencius. 'The Son of Heaven can lead forward a man and present him to Heaven, but he is unable to cause Heaven to give him All-Below-the-Sky.'

'Yao led forward Shun and presented him to Heaven, and Heaven approved him. Yao proclaimed him to the people, and the people accepted him. Therefore I said, Heaven did not utter words; it used his actions and his conduct of affairs to make apparent the divine influences from above — that is all.'

'In the Great Announcement it is said, "Heaven sees as my people see, Heaven hears as my people hear."''

Yao, as we have seen, chose Shun as his successor, and Shun chose Yü. The Emperor Yü was a great engineer. He drained the Empire, which until his time was so continually subject to floods that the Chinese people do him honour to this day with the whimsical saying, 'Without Yü we should all have been fishes.' This same Emperor is said to have cut the Three Chasms which I passed through on my way up the Great River. The Emperor Yü chose his Minister Yih to succeed him, but

the people would not accept the Minister and clamoured for the Emperor's son Ch'i to be their ruler.

From that time until the overthrow of the Dragon Throne in 1912, Chinese Emperors have succeeded by inheritance. The throne did not, however, pass necessarily to the eldest son, as has been the case in Western countries. Frequently, in fact, the Chinese rulers, in appointing a successor, passed over their sons, and chose some more suitable member of the Imperial clan. Frequently, too, the Emperor, feeling the burden of responsibility too heavy to bear, abdicated in favour of the man he appointed his heir.

As Mencius points out, Heaven does not utter words, and an heir presented to Heaven does not necessarily prove a success. It was simply in the prosperity and peace of All-Below-the-Sky that proof of an Emperor's fitness to rule could be found. Famine, disorder, and misery were taken as evidence of the ruler's incapacity — as evidence of Heaven's displeasure; and if the offending monarch did not abdicate, it was the duty of some public-spirited subject to raise the standard of revolt and found a new dynasty. From this it is clearly seen that the divine right of kings had no place in the Chinese theory of sovereignty. The people had a right to rebel. The Emperor was considered to be a good ruler if there was peace among his subjects and prosperity which came from Heaven.

As long as they had an Emperor — that is until 1912 — the Chinese believed in this theory. They believed, too, that he ruled, not China alone, but 'All-Below-the-Sky' — their term for the world.

They firmly believed that the other countries of the

world were vassals to the Son of Heaven, and demanded that the ambassadors from America and Europe should perform the 'kotow.' This meant that the ambassadors must kneel before the Son of Heaven and, striking their foreheads upon the ground nine times, acknowledge that he ruled the whole world.

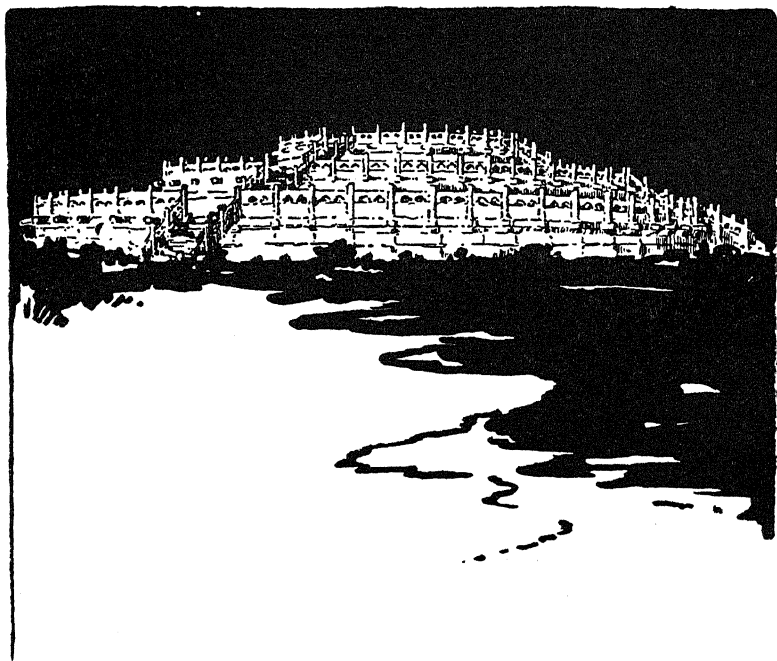
This theory was one of the principal stumbling-blocks in the relations between China and the Western nations. Naturally the ambassadors could not acknowledge the over-lordship of China, and the Chinese could not understand why they should refuse.

#### THE WORSHIP OF HEAVEN

The ideal ruler described so clearly by the ancient writers was truly a man apart, and his principal function was to act as an intermediary between the Above-Ruler and humanity. The cult of the worship of Heaven was in his hands. It was his duty to make periodical reports of his stewardship to the Above-Ruler from whom he held the order to govern the world, and this he did after a night of prayer and fasting, at an altar open to the sky, placed to the south of his Imperial residence. He was also bound to perform various sacrifices, such as those to the Sovereign of Grain and the Spirits of the Border Altars.

The Record of Rites gives most minute directions as to what the Son of Heaven shall do and how he shall perform his obligations. Any shortcoming on his part was supposed to result directly in misery to his people.

The Classic of Poetry records the despairing cry of King Hsüan who reigned 826-781 B.C. when his kingdom



THE ALTAR OPEN TO THE SKY

had been suffering for a number of years from a terrible drought. It reads in part:

Already the drought is terrible beyond expression!  
The heated air is overpowering; it is a concentrated fierceness.  
I have not ceased to offer the pure sacrifices,  
I myself have gone from the border altars to the ancestral  
temples.

To Heaven,  
To Earth,  
I have made the proper offerings,  
I have buried them in the ground.  
There is no spirit I have not honoured,  
Hou Chi could do no more.

Shang Ti does not look favourably upon us.  
This waste and ruin of the Earth —  
If my body alone might endure it!

Obviously a ruler who was supposed to live in such intimate relations with the other world, who must keep himself attuned to this intercourse by prayer and fasting, must not be worried with details of administration. Therefore, it was considered essential that he should be surrounded by wise statesmen who could assist him in the task of government. The post of Chief Adviser or Minister was especially important, and Chinese rulers have expended infinite pains in seeking out from among all ranks of the people their most able subjects in order that the post might be adequately filled.

#### THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Gradually a system of education was built up by which men of ability, irrespective of rank, were fitted to hold government offices. Their ability was tested by a series of competitive examinations, which, if they but proved themselves worthy from a scholarly point of view, gave them an official position.

Scholarship, which comprised a thorough knowledge of the ancient books and therefore a complete grasp of the principles underlying the theory of government, thus became in China the most highly valuable of all attributes. Scholarship provided the road to success and all that success meant. Therefore, the people strove earnestly to obtain this precious possession for their sons. Every assistance was given by the authorities, as it was considered essential that the Emperor should have



at his disposition the services of every well-educated man.

As every little English boy burns to be a Lord Nelson, a Duke of Wellington, a Gladstone, or a Disraeli; as every little American looks upon himself as a possible President of the United States, so every little Chinese was taught from infancy to hope that his name would appear in the list of learned men who ruled the State.

Mothers, as they hushed their babies, crooned lullabies such as, 'My little boy if he is good, will be a *ta lao yeh*' — *ta lao yeh* is the title for a high official. If a child, absorbed in play, neglected his meal, the mother said, 'If you don't eat your rice before it is cold, you will never be a *ta lao yeh*.' The little boy at once set to with a will.

The officials, whom poets often refer to as the 'horses' of the Emperor, were supposed to carry the whole burden of administration, and the Emperor himself was supposed to be the channel through which heavenly influences were transmitted to earthly undertakings. As his officials were responsible to him for the control of the districts to which they were appointed, so he was responsible to Vast-Heaven-Above-Ruler for the direction of All-Below-the-Sky. This distinct delegation and acceptance of authority is one of the most striking characteristics of the Chinese social system.

Nor were his assistants supposed to admire and approve all suggestions from the Son of Heaven — by no means. They were supposed to be his most severe critics and to express their criticism plainly. This was especially the case in regard to the Board of Censors, a remarkable body of men chosen from among the highest

scholars of the Empire. They were called, among other names, 'Ears-and-Eyes-Officers,' and their duty was not only to report to the Throne details regarding the government and welfare of the people, but also to censure the Emperor himself for anything they might consider blameworthy in his conduct or rule.

The poet Tu Fu held the post of Censor for a short time, but, unfortunately, the Emperor he served was no ideal Son of Heaven, and, when Tu Fu offered criticism, he lost his temper in a thoroughly human fashion. It must be admitted that the poet was singularly tactless in his method of procedure. He forced his way at night to the 'dragon bed' itself, and expressed his opinion very forcibly to his royal master.

This impetuous action cost Tu Fu his post, but his devotion to the Sovereign never wavered for an instant. However, when troubles and rebellions followed each other incessantly, he did plaintively express his conception of the ideal Emperor as one who ruled 'with hands folded on his breast, receiving the silken tribute of admonition and reproof.'

#### THE PURPLE FORBIDDEN CITY

The intimate connection supposed, by the Chinese, to exist between their Emperor and the Creator cannot be too strongly insisted upon.

The Creator, they believed, inhabited a constellation near the Pole Star called the 'Purple Protected Enclosure'; and the Emperor or Son of Heaven inhabited an enclosure known as the 'Purple Forbidden City.' He lived here with the Empress, the ladies of his harem, and their servants. No one else was allowed to enter these

precincts, which the Chinese considered sacred, except the officials who came to audience in the Halls of Ceremony.

As the city was dedicated to the Emperor's use, it was fitting that his personal emblems should be used in the decoration. Now the most important of these emblems was the dragon.

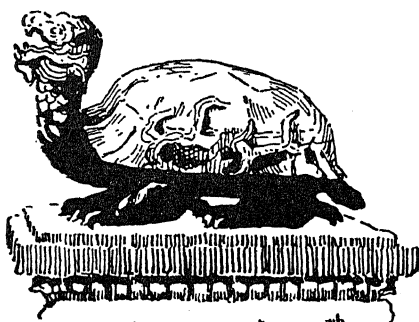
The Chinese dragon, however, must not be looked upon as a dreadful beast — not at all: he is, indeed, regarded as being very kind, because he controls the rain which fertilizes the earth. To a Chinese our pictures of Saint George killing the dragon must be very shocking, and really I feel quite strongly about it myself!

As I was saying, the dragon is the chief of the Imperial emblems. The Emperor's throne is called 'The Dragon Throne'; his bed, 'The Dragon Bed'; and his children 'The Dragon's Seed'; while the reigning Emperor is spoken of as the 'Dragon in Flight,' and his person is described as the 'Dragon's Body.' Therefore, the principal carvings in the Forbidden City show the dragon in his various forms.

Besides the infinite variety of actual dragons, it must not be forgotten that the great beast had nine sons who did not perfectly resemble him — that is, they were not pure-blooded dragons. Each is possessed of some great talent, possibly inherited from his mother's family, and each appears in the decoration of the Forbidden City. Descriptions of these sons vary slightly, but a generally accepted list is as follows:

Pei Hsi, Robust and of Extraordinary Strength: a creature resembling a turtle, which is able and likes to

bear great weights. It carries stone slabs which bear inscriptions.



THE PEI HSI

Ch'ih Wên, Hornless Dragon of the Edge: a sort of dragon which likes to gaze and look out, so is placed on the ridges of roofs.

P'u Lao, Strong Creature of the Reed Beds: a creature which loves to growl and make noises; therefore, it is used as a handle to great bells.

P'i Han, Fierce Black Feline: a creature which likes to use his energy and active strength. It is placed over prison doors, being very fierce.

T'ao T'ieh, Covetous Creature Which Eats Till Exhausted: a creature which is very gluttonous. It loves food and therefore is put on various vessels, as the cover or the handle, as a warning against gluttony.

Pa Sha, Hoarse Voice: a creature which loves water. It is put on the railing of bridges.

Ai Chai, Stare-at-and-Punish-too-Severely: a creature which likes to kill. It is therefore used on sword-handles and where blades join handles.

Suan Li, Young Lion with Red Eyes: a creature which is fond of smoke and fire, and is used on incense-burners.

Chiao T'u, Peppery Creature Which Surrounds Carefully: a creature which likes to close things, and is therefore used on door-handles.

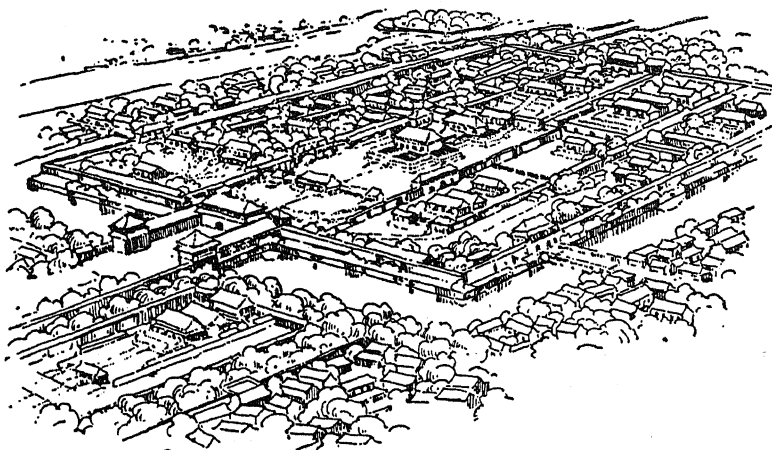
Apart from all these details of picturesque romance, one feels that the ancient Chinese system of government, in its ideals, resembles far more closely democratic government than it does any monarchy, especially as, in addition to the points already mentioned, the Emperor was regarded as the head of a clan and the father of his people.

#### WE ENTER THE CITY

Were an airman to approach Peking from the south, his eyes would first be arrested by the wonderful blue roofs and round white marble altar, among the trees of the vast space devoted to the worship of Heaven; and the square white altar to the west where sacrifices were performed to the Earth. As he flew yet farther north, he would be dazzled by the gleaming golden tiles of the Imperial City.

From the air he would see clearly the arrangement of the innumerable buildings composing it, which follows a very definite plan. There are two distinct portions of the city, the outer and the inner. The inner portion of the city is cut off from the outer by a wide moat and is enclosed by walls forming an immense square. This square was, strictly speaking, the 'forbidden' part.

The Halls of Ceremony are built, one directly behind the other, on a wide paved strip running through the centre of the square from south to north. A portion of this strip is higher than the rest, forming a vast stage on which the three principal halls are placed. Four gates facing the four cardinal points pierce the walls which rise from the edge of the moat; and each serves a special purpose.

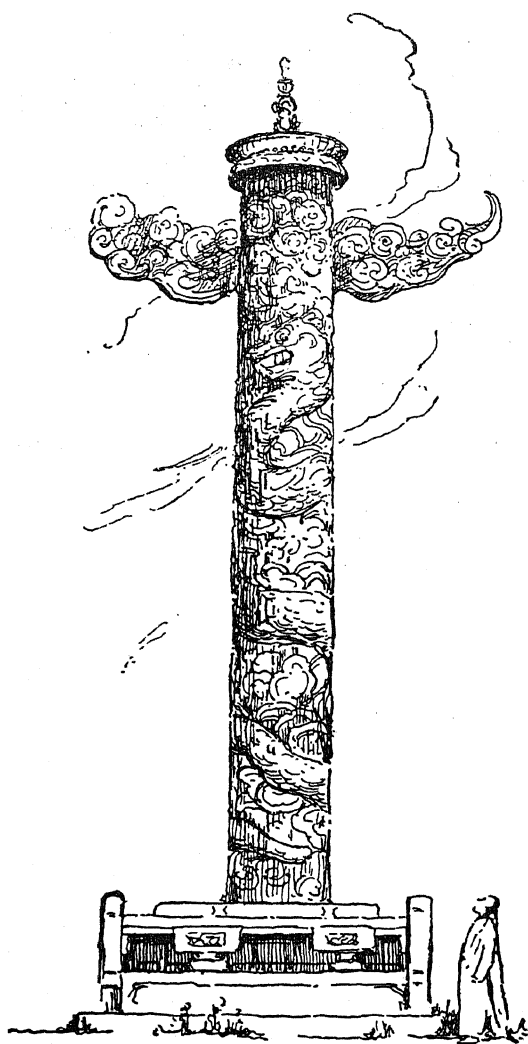


A 'BIRD ON THE WING' VIEW OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY

The southern half of the Forbidden City was designed for great ceremonials when the Son of Heaven received his officials in state, and the northern half was used for the daily interviews at dawn when ministers in constant communication with His Majesty entered by the north gate.

The approach to the inner city lies through a series of openings in the outer city wall, leading in a direct line from the busy Ch'ien Mên, or Before-Gate, in the wall of the Capital itself. The central doorway of the Before-Gate, which in Imperial days was kept closed, used to be opened wide upon the rare occasions when the Son of Heaven left his palace and proceeded to perform the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth at the round altar and the square, in the southern extremity of the South Suburb.

With these facts in mind, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos and I proceeded, in imagination, through the various



THE GLORY OF VIRTUE SIGNPOSTS

halls and palaces of the Purple Forbidden City. It may be called a glorification of, a consecration to that Harmony which brings peace and happiness to the world. The Chinese word for this harmony is *ho*, and is used in combination for the names of the principal palace halls; as, T'ai Ho Tien, Supreme Harmony Hall; Chung Ho Tien, Heart of Harmony Hall; and, Pao Ho Tien, Protection of Harmony Hall.

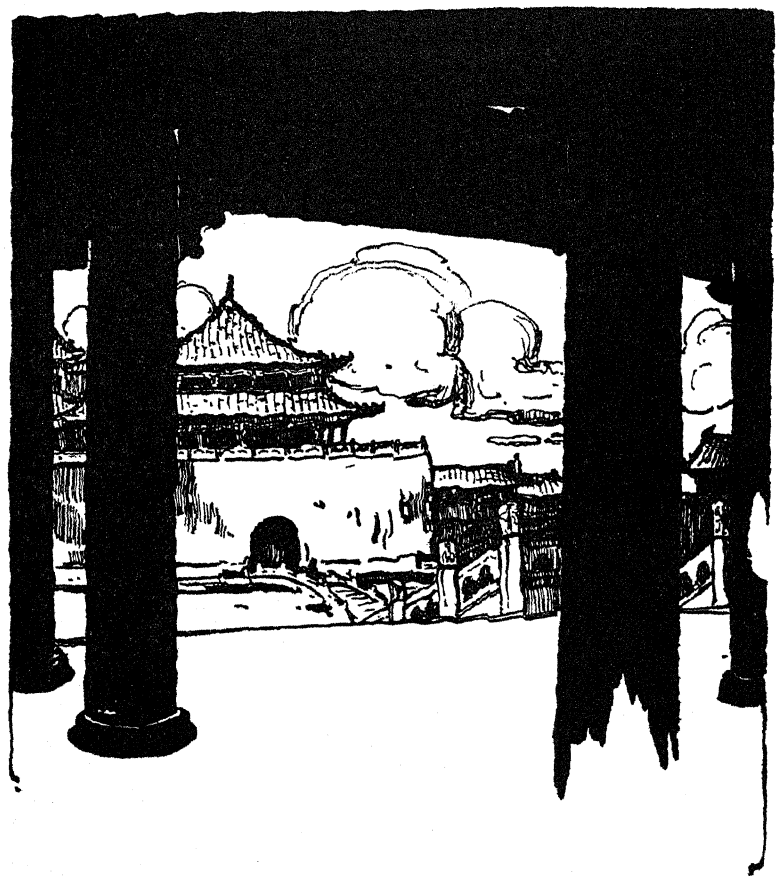
The gorgeous colouring of the buildings is symbolical. The walls are red — symbol of the south, the sun, happiness; while the roofs which cover the residence of the sovereigns on earth are of the bright yellow which is the symbol of the Earth.

The approach to the enclosure designated as forbidden is through the T'ien An Mên, Gate of Heaven's Peace. This is flanked by two beautifully decorated marble columns known as Hua P'iao, Glory of Virtue, signposts which were supposed to guide the Emperor upon the way he should tread. They are a survival of the Fei Pang Mu, Boards of Criticism and Detraction, instituted by Yao and placed by him and his successors outside the palace gates, in order that all who wished to do so might write upon them their opinion as to the acts of the ruler, and their suggestions for improvement in the government. The *hua p'iao* is also a symbol of the glory which should shine from the Emperor's virtue.

It is a long way from the Gate of Heaven's Peace to the colossal Wu Mên, Gate of the Sun-at-the-Zenith, which forms the entrance to the inner square, and the Emperor was the only person allowed to pass through it. Upon the solemn occasions when it was opened, a bell was sounded as the Son of Heaven passed under

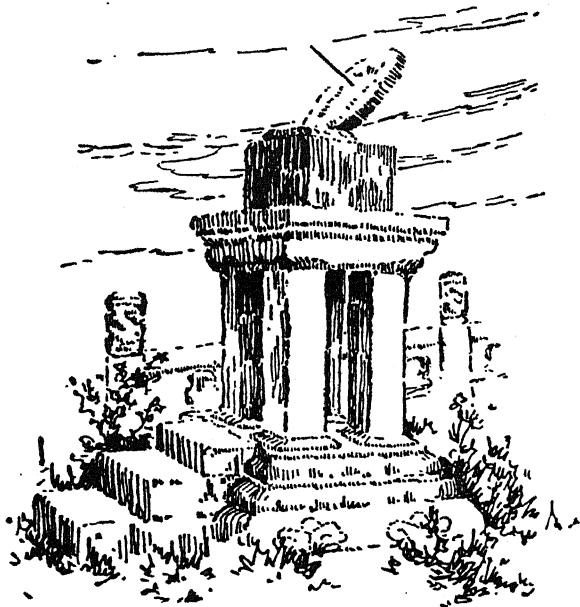


the central arch, thus announcing to the people of the Capital the fact that the Imperial sun was actually in the ascendant.



WU MÊN SEEN FROM SUPREME HARMONY GATE

Symbols stand on either side of the entrance. To the east a white marble sun-dial, or *jih kuei*. The idea it suggests is that as the sun-dial is useless when obscured



THE JIH KUEI

by clouds, so the Imperial sunshine is without effect if clouds — that is, evil counsellors — are allowed to intervene between the Emperor and his people. It also suggests to the ruler that he should emulate the sun whose light shines on high and low alike.

To the west stands a square, Grain Measure of Excellence, a *chia liang*. It is a symbol of the full measure of justice and mercy which should be given to every individual in the world, irrespective of his station. The measure should be level to the brim with benefits for the people.

Beyond the Gate of the Sun-at-the-Zenith lies the first courtyard, and through its centre, between marble

banks which sweep in a perfect curve, flows a water-course, symbol of the Earth. Here it is called the Golden Water River, but in the western hills, where its



THE CHIA LIANG

source lies, it is known as the Jade Stream. Five carved white marble bridges are thrown across its limpid water which reflects the brilliant sky. They correspond not only to the five virtues I have already named, but to many other fives in the numerical category; such as the five happinesses, the five relationships, the five colours, and so on.

As only the Sovereign and his personal attendants might pass through the great southern gateway, so only he might cross these bridges. Officials of his Court met

him, upon ceremonial occasions, in the space just beyond. Civil officers entered the Forbidden City by the eastern Glory-of-Virtue Gate in its outer wall, and then came to the inner precincts through United-in-Harmony Door. Military officers used the opposite and less honourable entrance, passing through the western Glory-of-Virtue Gate and Glorious-Harmony Door.

It must have been a remarkable spectacle when the Son of Heaven met his courtiers from the right and from the left, in that great white paved courtyard under the shadow of the vast tower of Sun-at-the-Zenith Gate. Facing them stood the T'ai Ho Mên, Supreme Harmony Gate, and two side gates used by officers of the Court. Bronze guardians of the hearth, those genial Dogs of Fo, mount guard on either side.

The ceiling of Supreme Harmony Gate is beautifully decorated in the design known as pond-weed wells, and it is faithfully reproduced in colour in the Japanese plates. Gold dragons form circles on a lovely green background. The Emperor used the central doorway; civil officials filed through the Door of Luminous Virtue, to the east; and military officials used the Door of Correct Conduct, to the west. In such order the procession swept up steps and down steps, and so into the immense Courtyard of Supreme Harmony which stretches in front of Supreme Harmony Hall.

This courtyard in front of Supreme Harmony Hall is very, very large indeed. Juliet Bredon, in her book on Peking, says: 'At the official review and celebration of the Allied Victory, the Court held more than fifteen thousand troops and guests, and could still have accommodated three times as many people.'

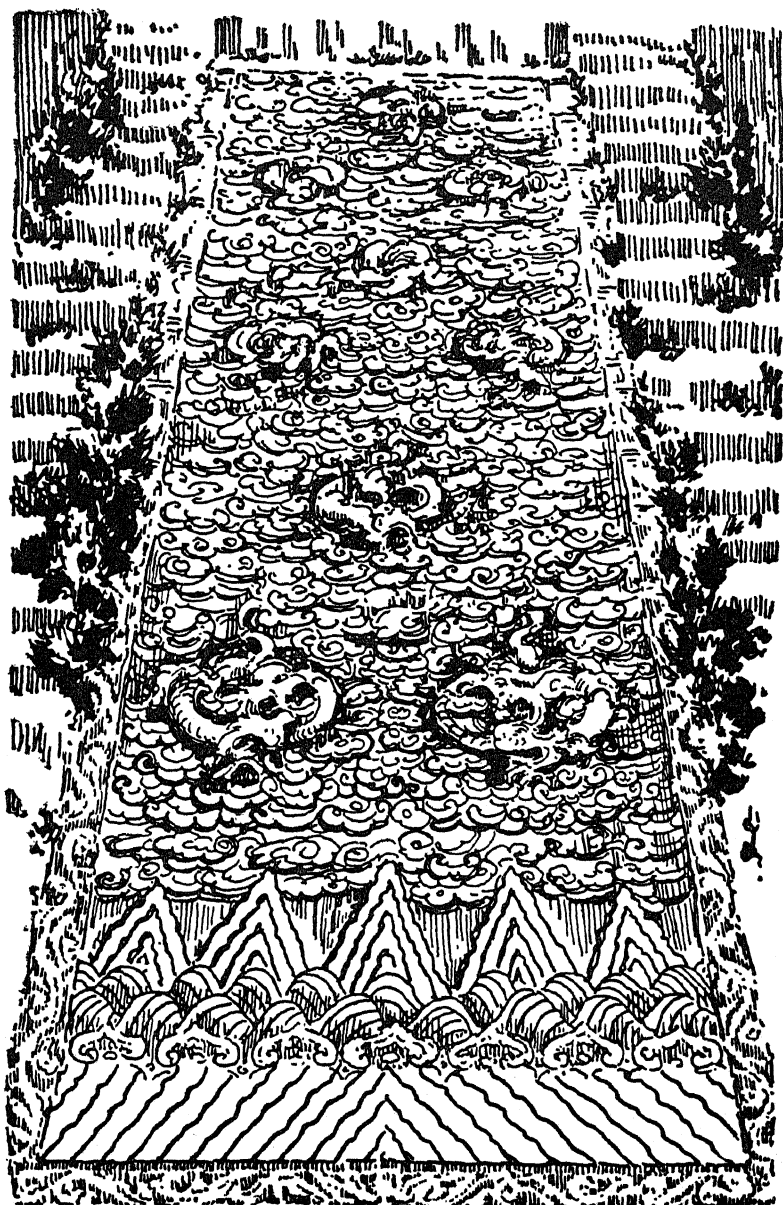
## THE THREE HALLS OF CEREMONY

The Supreme Harmony Courtyard stands at the southern extremity of the colossal stage on which the three principal halls of ceremony are built. Large gilded bronze vessels are placed at intervals, one above the other. These served to light the square space when ceremonies were held after dark, and were filled with oil upon which huge wicks floated and flamed.

Across the northern end, rising one above the other, stretch three terraces. They correspond to the Three Powers — that is, Heaven, Earth, and Man. When these powers act in perfect union, they are supposed to produce those greatest of blessings — peace and plenty. Four flights of steps, two wide and two narrow, lead from terrace to terrace and terminate at the doors of Supreme Harmony Hall.

In the very centre, flanked by the narrow flights, lies inclined a magnificent carved marble path, often called the Spirit Stair. Upon occasions of ceremony, the Imperial company mounted to the hall in a definitely prescribed manner. Civil officers used the outer eastern flight of stairs and military officers ascended by the outer western. The chair-bearers of the Emperor mounted the narrow flights on either side of the pathway, carrying the palanquin of the ruler between them. In this way the Son of Heaven rose to Supreme Harmony Hall over the symbolic ornamentation of the Spirit Stair.

A variety of dragon motives are used in the decoration of the terraces. The balustrade finials show Ying Lung and Ch'iao Shên writhing among clouds; Ying



THE CENTRAL PATHWAY OR SPIRIT STAIR

Lung means 'Correct-Conduct-Dragon.' The Chinese say 'the dragon which has fins is called correct conduct.' The Ch'iao Shên is the spirit of the mountain of that



THE YING LUNG

name. It is supposed to have the head of a dragon and the body of a bird, and *ch'iao* is also the name of the magpie, or bird of happiness.

The central pathway bears the five-clawed dragon, personal emblem of the Emperor. He is shown rising from high waves, which, in the words of Li T'ai-po, are 'connected like a mountain range.'

Various figures stand on the terraces: Dogs of Fo, pro-

tectors of temples, palaces, and homes; a crane of long life, who need only flap his wings and rise to carry the fortunate individual who has 'perfected his immortality' to the joyous realms of the Western Paradise; Pei Hsi — robust and of extraordinary strength — that son of the dragon who willingly bears weights. And on the upper terrace, the great Hall of Supreme Harmony, flanked by the sun-dial and the good measure, completely fills the centre. The whole composition forms a sermon in marble and bronze, illuminated by the symbolic colours, gold and rose.

The Hall of Ceremony is immense, and has a double roof supported by huge pillars painted in rich colours. The Imperial throne stands on a high dais in its centre and above the throne hangs a horizontal board bearing the inscription: 'By the establishment of high ideals the Ruler will adopt the best law for tranquillity in the State.'

Five stairways lead to the gilded Imperial seat, and incense-burners on tall, graceful stands are placed between the steps. There are incense-burners upon the dais, too, and tall, perforated gold columns through which fragrant fumes rose high above the Emperor's head. This custom of scenting the air upon ceremonial occasions is often referred to by Chinese poets as, 'Their bodies soaked in Imperial Essences the Officials return'; and as in the following poem by Wang Hei:

Written by Wang Hei, after a poem by Chia, the Secretary, on attending an Audience at Daybreak in the Great Brilliance Palace:

When the Sun's light is just appearing, the Chicken-man —  
his badge of Office a red head-cloth — proclaims the  
hour.



At this exact moment the Keeper of the Robes sends in the garment of eider-duck skin, its feathers — kingfisher green — lying in cloud-like curves.

In the Ninth Heaven, centre of all points of the compass, there opens the Ch'ang Ho Gate, first of all entrances to Heaven, as also open the gates of the Halls and Palaces here below,

The Ten Thousand countries send representatives, each in the robe and head-dress of his rank, to raise their hands in worship before the Ruler.

Sweet-scented smoke envelops the Emperor's robes of ceremony — in the floating mist the dragons seem to writhe — to live.

The Supreme Harmony Hall was used regularly three times each year. Here the Son of Heaven received his Court on the first day of the year when he returned from offering the sacrifices at the Altar of Heaven. At the winter solstice he also gave audience in great state from its high throne. Again on his own birthday the celebrations were held within its walls. In addition to these regular festivals, it was used for any occasion of great rejoicing such as took place when a Son of Heaven assumed office.

The two other Great Halls stand behind it. But 'great' is certainly not the descriptive adjective to be used for the Chung Ho Tien, Heart of Harmony Hall, as it is very small, indeed; but it was used on the important occasions when rites in connection with agriculture were performed. It was there the Son of Heaven made offerings to ancestral and other spirits, at the Season of Clear Brilliance in the spring; and there he inspected implements connected with the tilling of the soil. In fact, he made all preparations for the growing

season in this hall. And in the fall of the year, newly harvested grain was brought to the Heart of Harmony Hall to be shown to the Emperor.

The Imperial seat can hardly be called a throne, and it is but slightly raised. Characters are of course hung above it and read:

Sincerely hold fast the perfect mean.

The balanced phrases on either side proclaim:

At all times the Ruler mounts the Chariot drawn by six dragons that he may rise to Heaven; he shuns luxurious ease.

Spreading abroad and bestowing the five happinesses making clear to the Four Quarters that he is governed by eternal principles.

The phrase 'Chariot drawn by six dragons' is an allusion to the vehicle driven by a spirit called Hsi Ho, the Breath of Harmony, in which the sun is supposed to make his daily passage through space. The five happinesses are: long life, wealth, vigorous strength, love of virtue, and a natural or non-violent passing from this world.

Beyond Heart of Harmony Hall, and at the northern extremity of the platform, stands Pao Ho Tien, Protection of Harmony Hall. It has an especially beautiful ceiling of the pond-weed-well type, which is considered effective in warding off fire from the inside of a building, as owl-tail fish are supposed to be a guard from danger to the outside. The throne, although not so richly carved nor so elaborate as the one in the Great Hall of Ceremony, is very imposing and is placed on a high dais. The writing above it states:

In the creations of the Emperor are to be found most perfect excellence.

Protection of Harmony Hall had two chief uses. It was where tributary princes were offered a feast on the last day of the twelfth month, and where the candidates who had successfully passed the examinations for the highest literary degrees were received by the Emperor. The Senior Classic and the little band of ten scholars who had proved themselves the most able in the country thus automatically stepped into the ranks of the governing body.

Through the northern gateway of Protection of Harmony Hall a descent of forty-five steps is made from the three terraces corresponding to the Three Powers; and the Three Great Halls of Ceremony are left behind. The remainder of the Purple Forbidden City, north of this line, was looked upon as the private residence of the Son of Heaven. Here he lived with the ladies of his household, and the innumerable attendants who ministered to their wants.

#### THE PRIVATE HALLS

A lesser ascent terminates before the Gateway of the Cloudless Heaven, and from the gate a long causeway leads to the Palace of the Cloudless Heaven. The causeway is raised high above the courtyard, and is beautifully ornamented by Pa Sha, Hoarse Voice, the sons of the dragon who love running water. Their heads are used as gargoyles to carry away any superfluous moisture from the road used by the Son of Heaven in his passage from the Halls of Ceremony to his private apartments.

A sun-dial and a good measure stand to the east and west of the palace and a number of large incense-

burners are placed at intervals along the terrace. Gilded bronze oil-vessels stand in the court below the hall, in order to provide light when it is needed.

The steps and Imperial path leading from the causeway up into the hall are exquisitely and delicately carved with less boldness of relief than is the case in the enclosure devoted to the fostering of harmony. The decoration is, of course, symbolical. One of the symbols for which we had been searching had, so far, not appeared, but, as we studied the carving in front of this palace, which is devoted to the personal use of the Son of Heaven, Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos suddenly said in a quiet voice, 'It has come.'

'What has come?' I asked.

'The Ch'ieh Yü, the evil animal with the voice of a child. It has a dragon's head, a horse's tail, a tiger's claws. Its body is forty feet long, and it loves to eat men. If the princely Ruler has virtue, if he follows the right way of life, the evil animal remains hidden in the World of Shade; and if he has not virtue — then it is seen.'

The slanting panel which forms the Imperial path is most elaborate. From a background formed of the hundred flowers and other auspicious symbols rises the five-clawed dragon — the Emperor's personal emblem. In the four corners are *fêng huang*, or 'love pheasants.' They are the personal emblem of the Empress and do not appear in the decoration of the halls devoted to public ceremonial.

The nine steps on either side of the Imperial path are lovely. The artist who carved them was possessed of a chisel full of life's movement. Dragon-horses cavort

amid undulating waves on the marble slab below the stairway. Dogs of Fo roll their many-coloured ball in the centre of the first tread, and the long ribbons which sweep in lovely curves from the ball to the edges of the step encircle two of those evil creatures with the voices of children, who should remain unseen; *ch'i lin*, fabulous animals who promise peace and good fortune, appear on the second tread, and love pheasants among clouds on the third. The whole of this four-fold design is repeated on the remaining steps which reach the narrow platform before the palace door.

The Son of Heaven received his officials in the Palace of the Cloudless Heaven each day as the sun rose. The throne is most elaborate and very deeply carved with a heavy design of five-clawed dragons and clouds; it is in fact the Dragon Throne so often spoken of. The board above it reads:

Upright, Noble, Honourable, Clear of Intellect.

Such are supposed to be the attributes of the Son of Heaven.

A magnificent five-fold screen stands behind the throne, and in the centre of each fold a panel is inserted, and on each panel a quotation from the Classics is carved:

The central precept states:

Only Heaven is All-hearing, All-seeing, and perfect in  
Comprehension;  
Only the Perfect Ruler is at all times a Pattern;  
Only the absolutely sincere Official reverently follows the  
Ruler's example.  
Only the Virtuous People are obedient and allow their actions  
to be regulated.

In a word, only by harmonious coöperation can good government be achieved; only when the Son of Heaven follows the Way of Heaven can and will his officials take him as a pattern; and can and will his people accord with the regulations. The whole theory of Chinese government is contained in the passage, and it has stood the wear and tear of many centuries.

The sentences in the side panels read:

Achievement that is worthy of admiration, springs from  
perseverance;  
Patrimony can be widened only by diligence;  
The Emperor is above all creatures;  
The Ten Thousand Countries all enjoy peace.  
The Princely man is kind and courteous;  
He is a model for the Four Quarters;  
His knowledge of men shows discernment;  
He is able to conserve the people in peace — this shows his  
kindness.

I had a photograph of the Baby Emperor, last of the Manchu rulers, taken in 1908, the year he was chosen to mount the Dragon Throne, and I could not resist looking at it when Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos and I had finished our translation of the precepts with which he was surrounded.

It showed him a quaint, small person, aged about four, dressed very simply in padded winter garments which kept his arms outstretched. His little Oriental face was quite impassive, and he was standing correctly as an Emperor should do. His younger brother, a mere infant, who was photographed with him, was folded into a blackwood armchair, and looked thoroughly uncomfortable — but resigned as Eastern babies do.

The Dragon Throne, occupied by the Son of Heaven, is surrounded by carved railings, and incense-burners of various forms stand in front and at the sides. The furnishings of the hall are, of course, most gorgeous, and an enormous mirror is placed in such a manner that the throne is reflected on its brilliant surface.

As the Three Great Halls form the ceremonial portion of the Purple Forbidden City, so the Palace of the Cloudless Heaven and two other halls form the residential portion.

The Palace of the Cloudless Heaven is devoted to the Emperor's personal use, and the K'un Ning Kung, Palace of Earthly Peace, farthest north of the three in the northern half of the Purple Enclosure, is used by the Empress. Between the two stands the small building called Chiao T'ai Tien, Hall of Fusion and Permeation.

Imperial seals of past dynasties are kept in the Hall of Fusion and Permeation. They are placed in caskets and are arranged behind and at the sides of the small and very simple throne, which is not raised on a dais. The horizontal board hung above it bears only two words: Wu Wei, Non-Action. I do not suppose that any two words in the Chinese language have caused such endless discussion. They mean 'inaction'; yet the Chinese say, 'Do nothing and there is nothing that cannot be done'; and again, 'Perfect virtue does nothing, yet accomplishes everything'; and in the 'Analects' of Confucius it is said that the Emperor Shun instituted the rule of Wu Wei. This is explained as, rule by virtuous example and the Law of Nature, which will ensure the evolution and development of the people as a rule by force and

punishment can never do. It is exactly the same principle as that adopted by parents in regard to their children. The Chinese do not believe in discipline as understood in the West; and although precepts are very generally used, example is the keystone in the Chinese arch of culture, and the Son of Heaven is supposed to display it to perfection.

In an alcove to the east of the throne stands a magnificent gilt water-clock, which has dripped out the hours for centuries, and, I suppose, still does so. Thus even time springs from the heart of the Imperial residence.

All the decoration in the Hall of Fusion and Permeation shows a combination of the dragon and love-pheasant motives; and these two creatures appear, carved in high relief on the panels of the doors, and painted in soft colours on the wide roof-beams.

Behind the little central building stands the last ceremonial hall, Palace of Earthly Peace. As it is constructed for the use of the Imperial Consort, the doors are carved with her special emblem, the round full moon. Just beyond it to the north stretches the flower garden of the Ruler, and in its centre stands the Hall of Imperial Peace, where the Son of Heaven may rest from the cares of office, among trees and blossoming shrubs. The white marble balustrade is carved with a design of 'moving dragons,' and is surmounted by vases and peonies; by a play on words this decoration suggests the phrase 'Happiness, prosperity, and peace.' Very fine examples of the dragon son, Hoarse Voice, are used as water-spouts in the corners of the terrace, and below are lightly traced circles of 'longevity.'

The Imperial study, where the ruler kept his books,



is placed directly west of the Palace of the Cloudless Heaven, and is called Yang Hsin Tien, Hall Where the Heart is Nourished. The heart, of course, is looked upon by the Chinese as the seat of intellect. A poem by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung is carved on a screen directly behind the throne, and book-cases are ranged on either side.

In an inner apartment a beautifully painted symbolic frieze runs round the wall. It shows a round red sun shining from between pine branches, which are symbols of long life. The red sun stands for the Emperor, whose light is supposed to illuminate the world as the sun illuminates the universe; whose fortunes should rise higher and higher even as the sun rises. Cranes of long life and peaches of immortality are painted on the western wall. The panels are carved in a design of bamboo and epidendrum, also symbolical.

The bamboo can suggest many, many things, but here only two of these many meanings are intended — unchangeableness and willingness to receive advice. As the bamboo is evergreen and unaffected by the changing seasons, so the Emperor should never vacillate; he should be uninfluenced by trivialities; and as he is in the beginning, so should he be in the end. The bamboo has a hollow or empty centre, so should the Emperor keep an empty heart, or, as we should say, an open mind, one that is always ready to receive good suggestions and treasure good advice.

The epidendrum has been used as the symbol of a perfect man ever since Confucius enumerated its exquisite characteristics; and the Emperor is supposed to possess them all.

The Imperial bedroom is in the Hall Where the Heart is Nourished, and the dragon bed is hung with yellow curtains woven in a design known as the endless knot of long life, or the ten thousand characters of the revolving dragon; the character *shou* (longevity) appears, too, in several of its one hundred possible forms.

North of this private residence of the Emperor is the I K'un Kung, Assist-the-Earth Palace, residence of the Empress. It possesses two marvellous wooden screens; one is carved in the design known as *hsi shang mei shao*, and shows the magpie, bird of joy, among plum blossoms. The other screen is composed of the pines of longevity. The frieze and panels of the room are decorated with a design of bamboo. Thus the Three Friends, the pine, bamboo, and plum, 'who do not fear the winter's blast,' are all represented.

Panels and window-frets are ornamented with characters for longevity, and elaborate lanterns, screened in different shades of yellow, hang from the ceiling, while at the end of the room stands a magnificent circular mirror, which conveys the meaning, 'United in a complete circle for eternity!' A round mirror has several meanings: it is symbolic of married happiness. The death of a wife, the absence of a husband, are referred to as 'a broken mirror.' It also suggests complete comprehension; and is used as an allusion to the magic mirror in which the nature of hearts is reflected. These magic mirrors were used by the Great First Emperor of China to test the hearts of palace ladies.

The last gate of the Purple Forbidden City is called Shên Wu Men, Spirit-of-Bravery Gate. In addition to all his other attributes, the Son of Heaven is supposed

to be absolutely courageous; he is described as 'the princely Ruler, majestic and awe-inspiring.' Ironically enough, it was through the Spirit-of-Bravery Gate that the Emperor Kuang Hsü, his august aunt the Empress Dowager T'zū Hsi, and their Court fled, when in 1900 the Allied troops took Peking.

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos closed the brown-and-gold brocade portfolio, patted the plates carefully into place, and ran the ivory fasteners into their silk sockets. Our work on the pictures of the Purple Forbidden City was over, and I think we both felt that we had stepped out from another world. He bowed his farewell gravely, and, murmuring the idiomatic phrase, 'We meet on the bright morrow,' left my study.

For my part, until Yo Fei insisted that we go for our midday walk among the frosted cotton-fields, I sat quite still, thinking of the pictures we had examined and of the ideas they represent. Ideas which, although rooted in an antiquity difficult to realize, blossomed, until the other day, in the hearts and minds of the people of the Hundred Surnames, in the Ten Thousands Regions.

#### WITH THE AFTER-AFTER-THREE-WANDERERS

During the Period of Great Snow  
Bird of Happiness Quarter

It was brilliant North China weather when I at last visited the Purple Forbidden City. The canals were frozen and the air was very cold, but sunlight permeated every crack and cranny, warming high and low alike.

The After-After-Three-Wanderers and I went together and traced the symbolic decorations in the

courts we were allowed to enter. The great entrance of Sun-at-the-Zenith was closed to us, but we entered the court in front of Supreme Harmony Gate, beyond the five bridges which span the Golden Waters River. We talked over, too, our own experiences with the Imperial Court. In 1905, I had attended a reception at the Summer Palace; and after the Republic was established, one of my companion After-After-Three-Wanderers had been received in the private apartments of the Purple Forbidden City itself, so we exchanged reminiscences as we sat on the steps of Protection of Harmony Hall.

The audiences I had attended took place during the period of Cold Dews, which falls in early October. It is the moment when North China is most beautiful.

As a great concession to foreign custom, the hour of invitation was eight in the morning, instead of dawn, but because of the distance from Peking to the Summer Palace, there being then no motors in the Capital, we were obliged to rise and take our departure before day-break.

I had heard a great deal about the Empress Dowager, who was then making an effort to placate the outer barbarians, whom she had tried in 1900 to 'sweep into the sea,' but I did not expect to be impressed. My idea was that she was probably much like other old ladies, and that the trappings of royalty contributed largely to the sensations experienced when in her presence.

I was utterly wrong. The personality of the Old Buddha, as the Chinese called her, was very remarkable indeed.

When we were ushered into the reception hall, my

first impression was kaleidoscopic, with yellow as the predominating colour. The central point was supplied by the figure of a woman seated, with downcast eyes, high on a dais. Presently she raised her head, and from that moment I saw nothing but her mobile face and all-seeing eyes. She dominated the scene completely.

At her left on the dais, but on a lower throne than the one she occupied, sat a figure the opposite of hers in every particular. It was that of her nephew, the Emperor Kuang Hsü. While she was full of vitality, he was still, composed, controlled, and as though but half alive. Whereas her eyes flashed with an extraordinary fire, his, although quite as fine as his aunt's in size, colour, and shape, seemed to gaze into another sphere. He appeared unaware of what took place before him.

The guests advanced in turn, mounted a flight of narrow, shallow steps leading to the throne, shook hands with the Empress, who said, 'How d'y do,' most graciously, passed to her left and shook hands with the Son of Heaven.

The guests then backed away from the royal personages and walked down the little stairway backwards as best as they might. The horrible possibility of coming down wrong side up cast a gloom over the whole proceedings. However, no one did so, and when it was all over, we were escorted to a charming pavilion where lunch was served. Chinese dishes alternated with dishes prepared in the European manner, and they were all delicious.

The Empress Dowager did not appear at the table, but afterward she was borne in by sixteen bearers. She sat in her chair, which was placed on a sort of platform,

and this was raised to the height of the bearer's shoulders. Nothing could have been more charming and gracious than her manner, but it was not difficult to imagine that she was perfectly capable of exclaiming, 'Off with her head!' as the Queen of Hearts did to Alice, and I very much doubt whether anyone present would have had the courage to reply, 'Nonsense!'

We did not see the Emperor again, and for this I was sorry. His tragic figure interested me immensely. He looked like a creature whose bright spirit was crushed, whose life was devoid of hope; but his face was certainly not devoid of intelligence.

It was less than ten years later that my companion After-After-Wanderer knew the Court, but both the personalities, the dominating and the dominated, whom I had seen, had 'mounted dragons and ascended on high,' as the Chinese describe the death of a ruler.

The Empress Dowager of this later day was the pale, sad widow of Kuang Hsü, and the Son of Heaven was the child Hsüan T'ung, who had been chosen by the indomitable Old Buddha to fill the office.

The After-After-Wanderer was present at several audiences, but the last was the most touching. The Manchu Dynasty had retired; the Empress Dowager was ill and neglected by the world. She was glad to welcome in the inner precincts of the palace a woman of sympathy and feeling, for after all East and West, in their emotions at least, are one.

Talking of these things, we lingered. But after a while we left the Purple Forbidden City and climbed the Coal Hill to the north. From there we could look down on the gleaming yellow roofs and the soft rose-red walls

of that enclosure where the Son of Heaven had dwelt; a ruler who governed his domain by a system that glorified, not the strong man, the man of force, but the enlightened man, the man of virtue. A ruler whose people made their national hero, not a general victorious in war, but a sage who preached the ethics of peace. I speak of Confucius. Dynasty after dynasty has gloried in heaping honour upon him, he has been looked upon as the equal of Heaven and Earth, and his ideals of government have inspired the nation. In the Book of Words and Discussions may be read:

The Master said: People who are led in the paths they should go by means of laws and regulations, who are made uniform, and perfect as a field of ripe grain, by means of the sword and torture, may avoid transgression, but their ears will never redden with the sense of shame.

People who are led in the path they should go by means of good example springing straight from the heart, who are made uniform and perfect, by means of that worship and sacrifice which brings happiness, will feel shame. Moreover, their excellence will rise and spread as the branches of a great tree.

Today the revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen has taken the place of Confucius in the hearts of the young — he, too, was a man of high ideals, and no hero of the battlefields.

We spoke of these things, too, together — the After-After-Wanderer and I, and we discussed the aversion to war and militarism so characteristic of the 'Black-Haired People.' They have experienced fighting — plenty of it; but, so far as I know, the note of glory and triumphant victory is never sounded. The miseries of

war, and not only the physical miseries — these Orientals bear with stoic calm — but the spiritual ills that must attend the rousing of hate, form the theme of their songs.

I quoted a poem by Li T'ai-po which appears in 'Fir-Flower Tablets':

In savage attack they die fighting without arms, in locked  
embrace;  
The riderless horses scream with terror, throwing their heads  
up to the sky.  
Vultures and kites tear the bowels of men with their beaks,  
And fly to hang them on the branches of dead trees.  
Soldiers lying in mud, in grass, in undergrowth;  
Helpless the General — Yes, incapable before this!  
We have learnt that soldiers are evil tools,  
But wise men have not accomplished the ending of strife,  
and still employ them.

Impractical as this system seems to us who have lived in a different atmosphere, it is as well to remember that this conception of social relationship has proved as enduring as is its most popular emblem of longevity, the bamboo. China, ruled on the principles of accord and harmony, has existed in the realm of authentic history since about the year 2000 B.C. Empires ruled by force have been uniformly short-lived.

The system, it is true, springs from very early origins, but the man who did more than any one human being to consolidate it lies beneath cypress trees near the village where he was born. A simple headstone marks the resting-place of Confucius, and the inscription upon it reads:

The Great and Perfect One; the Completely Enlightened One;  
The Ruler whose Virtue Diffuses Transforming Doctrine.





THE GRAVE OF CONFUCIUS

## A PAGE FROM MY DIARY

By the Bay of Plentiful Fish,  
New Brunswick, Nov. 7, 1924

Our daily train puffed in at noon quite as usual; the trail of white smoke which curled through the spruce trees by the shore looked perfectly normal; the mail

arrived in its due course. I tore off the familiar magenta cover which the *Boston Transcript* dons for its journey to the Maritime Provinces, and realized in a flash that, however natural all things might seem, there was a difference — something had gone from the world.

## BOY EMPEROR SURRENDERS HIS DOMAIN

### HSÜAN T'UNG, EJECTED BY PEKING POLICE, SEEKS REFUGE IN FATHER'S HOUSE

(Special cable to the *Boston Transcript*. Copyright, 1924, by Public Ledger Company)

Peking, Nov. 6. The youthful Manchu Emperor, Hsüan T'ung, for years a virtual prisoner within the pink-washed walls of the Forbidden City in the centre of Peking, was ejected by the Peking police and compelled to take refuge with his entire family in his father's house, within the so-called Imperial City which surrounds the Forbidden City.

The 'Boy Emperor' <sup>2</sup> signed papers formally abdicating his title and surrendering all his extensive lands and properties to the Republic of China.

After four thousand years there is no longer a Son of Heaven.

## I SCALE T'AI SHAN THE HIGH HILL

What then is the nature of Tai Tsung, Honourable Ancestor  
of all Mountains?

Seen from Ch'i in the North, from Ch'u in the South, its  
green colour does not fade away.

Invested at the hour of formation and evolution with super-  
natural qualities,

<sup>2</sup> On March 9, 1932, the former 'Boy Emperor' was installed at Mukden as Permanent President of the new State of Manchukuo, formed from the Chinese Province of Manchuria.

Dividing northern shade from southern light, it cuts the  
darkness from the dawn.  
Into cloud layers, rising from its scoured breast,  
Fly birds returning to roost; my eyes open until the corners  
crack, follow their flight.  
I shall climb Nothing Beyond Peak,  
Whence beheld, all hills are small.

TU FU: *The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*

If journeys gave *me* pleasure, they were equally entertaining to the Chinese about us, and as long as I lived in China I always found an interest in the bands of pilgrims, whom we often met, bound for some Taoist or Buddhist shrine. These bands were as a rule made up of elderly women who thus expended their lifetime savings and who were in charge of a leader. They always wore some distinguishing mark, such as red ankle bandages and scarves, or yellow belts. They also carried long staffs of plain white wood, which staffs were stamped at the various temples and sacred places they visited. This evidence of their travels was preserved with pride, and the old ladies showed off their staffs as proudly as globe-trotters in the West show off their foreign luggage labels.

Amah had gone to the Buddhist sanctuary at the Island of Pootoo with one such band, and a dear old tailor-amah whom I knew very well had gone on a pilgrimage to T'ai Shan, the High Hill, where there are Buddhist as well as Taoist temples. She told me that the expenses for the journey had been paid by her nephew, who was a rich man. He had suggested a feast in honour of her seventieth birthday, but she, an ardent Buddhist and therefore a vegetarian, told

him that it would give her no pleasure at all to have hundreds of ducks and chickens slaughtered in her honour and that she preferred to go on a pilgrimage.

I wondered — unworthily, perhaps — whether the nephew thought that this was as amusing as the feast which he could have shared, but I kept my questions to myself and listened while she described the beauties of the High Hill which rises from the plain of Shantung near the birthplace of Confucius. Her description was especially interesting to me, as I was about to start for the very same place.

Four of us made the pilgrimage together. My husband and I, a British consular official of high rank, and an active member of that important body, the Shanghai Municipal Council. However willing I might have been to travel in the simple way Chinese pilgrims do, the three men were certainly not ready to suffer discomfort. It was impossible to use a houseboat in the Shantung plain, so elaborate preparations were made for railway travel, and we started on our journey in a beautiful private car lent us by a director of the newly opened Shanghai-Nanking Railway. Number One Boy went with us as did Number One Cook, and there was, of course, a steward in charge of the car, so we slid away most luxuriously. Like snails, we carried a fine house on our backs.

I think that the view of the High Hill is a trifle disappointing. It is a heavy mass surrounded by hills which crowd upon it, making for confusion. It is not distinguished, as is the wonderful purple mountain near Nanking, with a glorious upward sweep. Its shape in fact minimizes its height.



STEPS ON THE GREAT PILGRIM'S ROAD

From where the mountain folds to earth, the path rises straight to the summit. Evidently the first pilgrim who sought to approach the Spirit of T'ai Shan, looking neither to the right nor to the left, chose this route, and in his footsteps for countless centuries myriads of his brethren have trodden.

This path has now grown into the great stone-paved Pilgrims' Road, one of the most remarkable sights of the mountain, lined on either hand with scores of temples and planted thick with cypress. 'He who climbs must pass from low to high, but to see the sights, he should descend from high to low,' so runs a well-known proverb.

We followed this advice and hired a strange T'ai Shan chair, carried by Mohammedan bearers who monopolize the trade. I fixed my mind upon the summit, and advanced sideways like a crab, between two men who walked abreast. The ascent is so perpendicular that it would be impossible to carry a chair in the usual way, so this method, which provides the acme of insecurity as regards the sensations of the passenger, is adopted.

The people upon the mountain-side are absorbing. Hordes of beggars — such well-fed, healthy beggars — divide the mountain into 'spheres of influence' and never interfere with one another. They pursue the traveller with their irritating wail only so far as their own borderline, when another takes up the chant.

Rich pilgrims, scattering coins to right and left, are carried down the steep steps at a terrifying rate; poor pilgrims toil painfully up or down; it is not easy to decide which journey is the more difficult to accomplish.

Presently the road at the base gives way to broad

steps, the broad to narrow, and finally the foot of the gorge, which terminates at the Southern Gate of Heaven, is reached. From the gorge the famous flight of steps, *shih pa p'an*, or eighteen coils, rises perfectly sheer. Iron chains stretched on either side help travellers to pull themselves up, and most people are exceedingly glad of this assistance.



THE EIGHTEEN COILS RISE TO GATE OF HEAVEN

The view from the Southern Gate of Heaven is awe-inspiring, and I think that a wind must always draw through the opening. When we were there, an icy blast cut to the very marrow of my bones.

The day was grey and still; the tones of the landscape

were in greys and browns relieved by the sombre green of cypress and pine. Choughs wheeled above us, uttering strange cries. From a cave high in the cliff came the sound of a woman's voice calling a Buddhist prayer, *o-mi-to-fo, o-mi-to-fo*, accompanied by the tapping sound of wood meeting wood as she beat her wooden fish. Every inch of ground is hallowed by the memory of events connected with the great men of China, whose ghosts must make a mighty host at those times when spirits return from the World of Shades to revisit their favourite haunts.

In early April, when the decorative garment of snow has been cast off, the impression borne in upon the traveller is one of age — grey, limitless, infinite age. Colossal boulders, which have surely been there since the Creation, will as surely remain to the End of Time.

How beautiful the mountain must be when Spring casts her mantle of tender green over this rugged foundation; when flowers, emblems of resurrection, spring from every crevice! The Chinese are right: the High Hill provides the perfect symbol of Eternity itself.

For the ascent of the mountain my T'ai Shan chair was provided with four men; two to carry it, and the other two to proceed one in front and one behind. They wear curious soft shoes, a sort of foot mittens, if one can use such a phrase, so the feet can cling to the edges of the steps.

Behind us to the south lay T'ai An Ch'êng, Walled City of Great Peace, which contains many temples and monuments of great interest. The most important building is, of course, the temple to the Honourable Hill of Generations, but I found the very ancient



trees more thrilling than works from the hands of men.

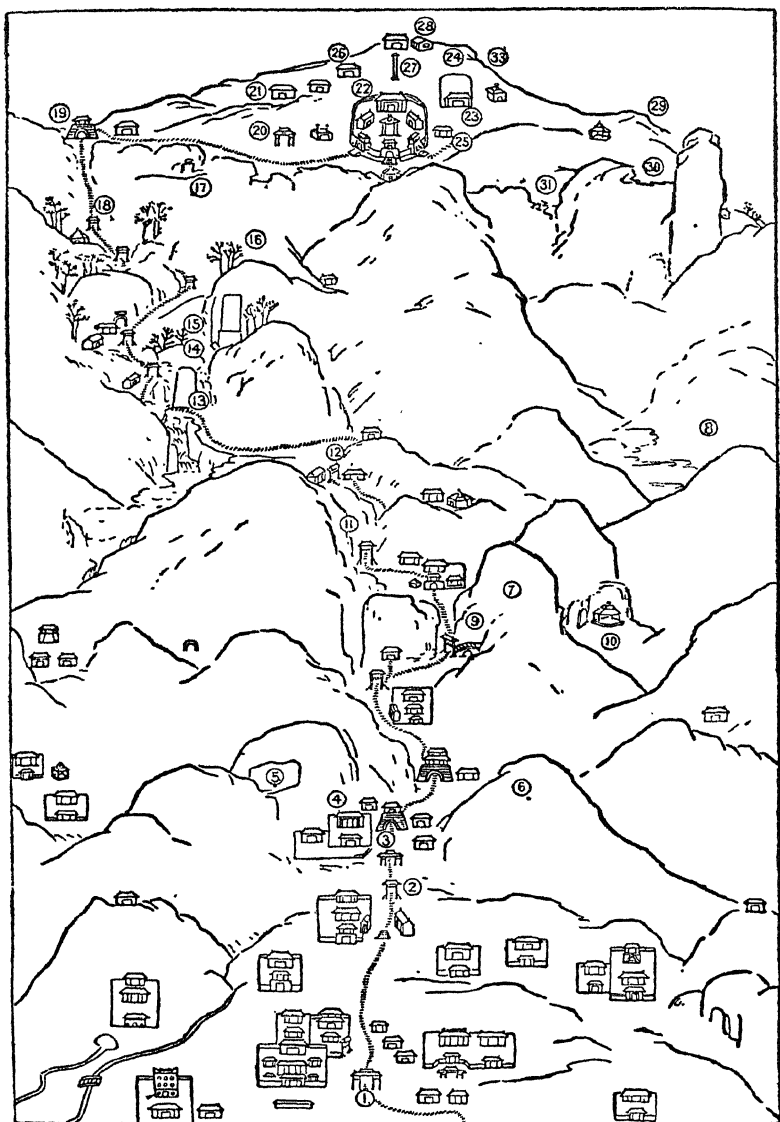
A group of gnarled old *thuyas* is supposed to date from the later Han Dynasty which ruled from A.D. 25 to 220, and an enormous acacia is attributed to the T'ang Dynasty, A.D. 618-905. Whether or not these dates are correct, it is certain that many autumns have passed since the seeds of the trees sprang from the earth prison.

The picture here will give you an idea of the important sites of the High Hill as the paved Pilgrims' Road runs across the plain from the north gate of T'ai An Ch'êng, passes under the Arch to the Hill of Generations (1) and reaches the First Gate of Heaven (2), where the actual ascent begins.

Innumerable sites on the slopes of T'ai Shan are connected with the sage Confucius, whose birthplace and whose tomb lie less than a hundred miles south of the mountain-foot. Just beyond the First Gate of Heaven (3), it is said that he turned and, sweeping the plain with a glance, remarked that the State of Lu — the ancient name of Shantung — looked exceedingly small!

All sorts of temples stand to right and left, among others the central shrine to the Princess of the Coloured Clouds (4). Her principal seat is at the mountain-summit and a third temple in her honour stands south-west of the city. This central shrine is called Palace of the Vermilion Door, in reference to a red rock on the hill above it (5).

On a hillock east of the road is a curious memorial — the tomb of a white mule (6) — a noble beast said to have been presented by the local prefect to a T'ang Emperor who came in A.D. 726 to offer sacrifice on the



IMPORTANT SITES ON THE HIGH HILL

mountain. The story goes that the animal performed all the functions required of him without a trace of fatigue; carried the Son of Heaven up the mountain and down again; and then, having completed his life's work, quietly lay down and died. His death was reported to the Emperor, who at once bestowed the title of General upon the white mule and ordered that he should be coffined and buried.

On the east side of the road the Bridge Which Rests by the Flowing Stream (7) leads under the Precipice Where Horses Rest (8), past the Grotto Screened by Water (9) to the Valley of the Classic on the Rock (10) — a most remarkable ancient footstep. On a high wall of rock stands, carved in large characters, a Buddhist writing dating from about A.D. 570. The characters have suffered a good deal in the centuries which have passed over them, but are still legible.

Slightly above the Bridge Which Rests by the Flowing Stream, the main road turns sharply to the left and runs at a fair level to the Arch Where Horses Turn (11), and then mounts at a steep angle to the Second Gate of Heaven (12). This marks the middle of the ascent from the mountain-foot to the Southern Heaven Gate near the summit. [P. 111]

As if to encourage the traveller, the road then winds along the mountain-side for a distance of three *li* — a little more than an English mile — at a most agreeable slope. Pilgrims may take their breath and enjoy the beautiful views which open out on every side, especially if they do not realize what is before them! Arrived at the little Plateau of the Imperial Tent (13), where the Emperor Chên Tsung is supposed to have rested when he made

the ascent in A.D. 1008, all is well, but a sudden turn to the right reveals an endless staircase which seems to lead to the very clouds themselves. It is the path to the mountain-top — and must be overcome, cost what it may in fatigue and aching limbs.

Dozens and dozens of historical sites are noted by the Chinese; here is the Rock Which Flew Hither (14); there once stood the pine under whose spreading branches the First Emperor is supposed to have taken refuge from a sudden storm, some hundred years before our era. In gratitude to the tree he bestowed upon it a patent of nobility of the Fifth Degree. Today a memorial arch tells the story (15).

A little higher, five peaks resemble, to the seeing eye, an Opening Lotus Blossom (16), and above this group is the White Clouds Grotto (17), where the mists which water the Flowery Kingdom are supposed to be manufactured. The pilgrims toil on and on and finally reach the Arch Whence-One-Advances-by-One's-Own-Power to Immortality (18). The weary steps of advancement are called the Ten and Eight Coils. They end at the Southern Heaven Gate (19), and at the moment of arrival, immortality itself seems but a poor reward for the physical effort expended.

The mountain-top is literally covered with temples, monuments, and sites of interest. Halfway between the Gate and the Temple of the Eastern Peak is a spot where tradition holds that Confucius stood and gazed towards Wu (20).

Many anecdotes connect Confucius with T'ai Shan. One of the most delightful describes an incident which occurred one day as Confucius and his disciple Tzû Lu



THE SOUTHERN GATE OF HEAVEN

were strolling along a path. It is said that they heard a woman weeping bitterly and found, upon inquiry, that not only had her son just been eaten by a tiger, but that her husband had some time earlier shared the same fate, as his father had done before him. Much shocked,

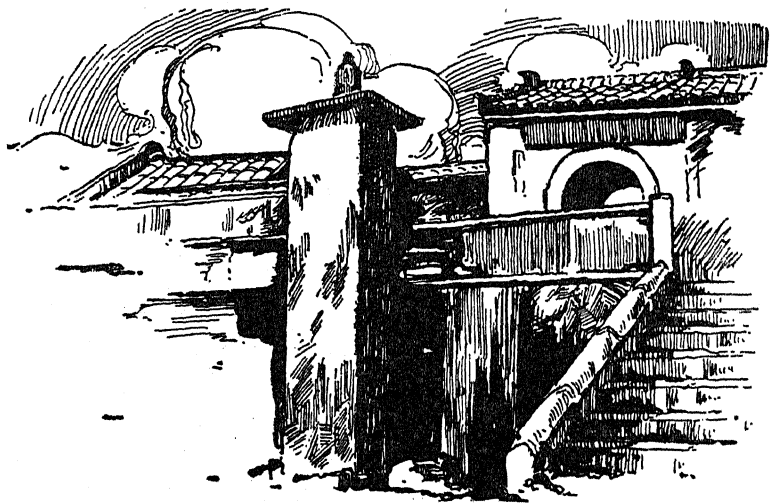
the sage asked her why in the world she did not leave such a dangerous country. Between her sobs the woman explained that, although the country might be very dangerous from the point of view of wild animals, at least the government was good, and people were not oppressed. Which incident provided the great teacher with an excellent theme for one of his celebrated parables on the importance of benevolent government. A temple to Confucius (21) stands above the spot where he is supposed to have stood.

My readers may now consider that our perspiring



NEAR THE PEAK OF THE HIGH HILL

Mohammedan bearers have carried us to the very peak of the Ancient Hill of Generations, a name by which the Chinese often address T'ai Shan. The rocks which mark the top are enclosed by a stone railing and temple buildings completely blot out the view. In a little sanctuary to the north of the rocks sits the Jade Sovereign (28). His shrine is covered with iron tiles firmly fixed in order that they may withstand the winds which howl about the mountain-top, and his person is richly gilded.



THE MONUMENT WITH NO INSCRIPTION

Just by the side of the final flight of steps in a rather constricted position stands the famous Tablet with No Inscription (27). Its origin is still a mystery. Local tradition ascribes it to Shih Huang Ti, the intrepid founder of the united Chinese Empire, who burnt all existing books that history might begin with him. Vari-

ous authorities, however, consider that it is the monument erected by the Emperor Wu of Han in 110 B.C.

To our right is the Palace of the Green or Azure Emperor who presides over the Eastern Quarter (26). His compeers, the red, white, yellow, and black Emperors, rule the other quarters.

I could not go to the gate of Eastern Heaven (29), nor could I look down the terrifying precipice where suicides were wont to throw themselves to their death. Its old name was Cliff Where the Body is Abandoned (30). During the Ming Dynasty a benevolent governor, who hoped to prevent people from committing suicide, built a protecting wall and changed the name of the place to Cliff Where the Body is Loved and Treasured.

A little way down the mountain are the curious rocks



THE BRIDGE OF THE IMMORTALS (31)



called Bridge of the Immortals (31) and the Pavilion Where Clouds are Formed, while the largest and most important temple on the sacred mountain is the Palace of the Princess of the Coloured Clouds (22). It can be seen in the cluster of buildings at the upper centre of the chart at the point where the path ends.

The worship of this goddess is only about nine hundred years old. It began in A.D. 1008, when that mild, affectionate, but capable ruler of the Sun Dynasty, Chên Tsung, performed here the sacrifice of Fêng and Shan. On that historic occasion he discovered a rough stone statue on the summit of T'ai Shan. Of this he caused a jade replica to be made, which was placed in the neighbourhood of the pool. The statue of the lady soon attracted crowds of worshippers, and her temple is now the most magnificent on the mountain. The goddess, whose full name is Pi Hsia Yün Chün, Goddess of the Coloured Clouds, and reputed to be the daughter of the Spirit of the mountain, is generally attended by acolytes, such as the goddess who grants children and the goddess who grants eyesight.

The less important edifice beyond the palace is the Temple of the Eastern Peak (23). An interesting relic is connected with the enclosure. Framed in the southern wall of the court is the curious emblematical map of the Five Sacred Peaks, from which rubbings are constantly made. It was erected at the end of the Ming Dynasty in A.D. 1614. Behind the temple is the Inscription of the Polished Rock (24), where in large characters is carved a writing from the brush of the Bright Emperor, which he wrote when he visited the mountain in A.D. 726.

To the south of the Temple of the Eastern Peak is the

site of the pavilion where the Emperor changed his robes (25) before performing the sacrificial ceremonies.

Although hosts of pilgrims throng to the High Hill during the first four months of the year, it is not necessary to worship there, or in any of the temples erected in its honour, to obtain the benefits which the Spirit of the mountain dispenses, as amulets of many sorts are supposed to carry its energy.

These amulets are of infinite variety: curious conventional maps of the five peaks; reproductions of the T'ai Shan seal; rubbings from the many pious inscriptions which abound — all considered most efficacious. Moreover, those who desire protection for their houses have but to place in one of their outer walls a stone inscribed with the characters *T'ai Shan Shih kan tang*, Stone of T'ai Shan.

My eyes rested upon the old women and the bent and ancient men who were buying these amulets, and I wondered thoughtfully what these *yü jen* — uninstructed people, as the Chinese officials call the masses — were doing among these monuments of rank and power.

The original cult of the T'ai Shan has no connection with the unenlightened, yet countless pilgrims toil wearily up the endless steps which lead to the Southern Gate of Heaven, and worship at the Honourable Hill of Generations is one of the most universal in China.

T'ai Shan is the fount of life. In logical sequence, therefore, as according to the Chinese theory one of the three *hun* or souls is destined to be born again, it also controls death. A poet who died A.D. 252 announced his approaching end in the words: 'My days are on the

wane, the Peak of the East has given me an appointment.'

As T'ai Shan thus gives life and demands it again, one may conclude that it presides over the greater part of human existence, and those who desire length of days repair to the mountain in supplication.

Tradition points out very definitely the exact spot where the spirits of the dead reënter the slopes of the sacred mountain on their journey to the World of Shades, which lies below. This is on a hillock to the south of the main mass, called Hao Li Shan, where countless tablets, erected by families or village communities, mark the spot where the spirits of their dead ancestors assemble.

T'ai Shan possesses also judicial attributes; in fact, in popular imagination the office of Judge of the Lower World belongs to the mountain spirit. Many tablets found in the temples to the Eastern Peak, which are established in all cities of importance, attest to this fact. 'He judges without partiality'; 'Here it is difficult to deceive'; thus they run in endless variety, and over the main entrance gate of such temples an immense counting machine is generally hung, upon which the Spirit of T'ai Shan can compute the sum of good deeds and evil committed by the souls he is supposed to judge.

My reveries were interrupted. The bearers, who realized the distance from this high peak to the plains below, were anxious to be off in order that we should arrive before dark. So I was obliged to seat myself in that awful thing they called a chair. There seemed nothing but a couple of boards between me and eternity as I was carried down.



DESCENDING T'AI SHAN

Going up was bad enough; coming down was — horrible. The journey is made at an appalling rate. The bearers glide their feet from step to step in a glorified *chassé*. The man in front shouts loudly, that the road may be cleared; the man behind, who ties a rag to a bar of the chair, acts as a sort of brake. The helpless passenger prays fervently to his patron saint for protection — at least I did.

When we reached the plain it was the hour of Yellow Dusk. I insisted upon halting for a moment to look back at this mountain which had been revered from the beginning of Chinese history.

The Chinese name for God the Creator is Shang Ti — the Above-Lord. Below him are the spirits of the air, of clouds and thunder, of wind and rain. In the lowest rank are spirits of the roads, of the villages, of mountains and of rivers.

The T'ai Shan is one of these inferior deities, and from the dawn of history it has been regarded with the deepest respect. Great men and lesser men have made long journeys in order to worship at its foot, and the rugged slopes must be peopled with countless ghosts.

The functions of a sacred mountain are of two sorts. On the one hand, as its mass towers above and commands all the surrounding country, it is supposed to be the ruler who prevents the soil from becoming agitated, and the streams from breaking their banks. It should, therefore, ward off earthquakes and floods. On the other hand, as clouds, from which are derived the life-giving showers that make the earth fruitful, gather around its summit and seem to be of its manufacture, it is supposed to hold them in control. So one of the

titles of a sacred mountain is 'He Who Assembles Clouds and Governs Rain.'

There are five of these hallowed hills connected with the earliest religion of China: one stands at each of the four points of the compass and one fills the centre.

They are T'ai Shan, the High Hill in Shantung, which corresponds to the east. Hêng Shan, Crosswise Mountain in Hunan, according with the south. Hua Shan, the Glorious or Flowery Mountain in Shensi, Peak of the West, and Hêng Shan, the Long-Enduring Mountain, in Chihli, concurring with the north. While highest of all towers Sung Shan, the Lofty Mountain in Honan, Peak of the Centre.

In addition to the characteristics common to other mountains, T'ai Shan possesses certain characteristics peculiar to itself. Being the Peak of the East, it presides over the quarter of the universe in which the sun rises, and from which spring light, heat, and all life-giving principles.

#### IMPERIAL SACRIFICES TO THE HIGH HILL

Two special sacrifices are intimately connected with the High Hill and are very famous indeed. That of Fêng, 'to seal,' offered to Heaven at the summit, and that of Shan, 'to level an area for an altar,' offered to Earth at the base of the mountain.

Tradition relates that the legendary Emperors themselves performed these rites, but the cold light of history reveals that in all probability they were inaugurated 110 B.C. by the Emperor Wu of Han. He was a remarkable character, and his reign is one of the high lights in Chinese annals.

Were we to depend upon the accounts published at this time, for our knowledge of the ritual observed on the first occasion of the performances of the sacrifices Fêng and Shan, we should be in evil case, indeed. The ceremony took place in the greatest secrecy, the Emperor being accompanied by but one official, who died suddenly a few days later. The progress of the Great Ruler and his faithful attendant as they climbed the side of the mighty mountain by stealth must have been eerie in the extreme.

The essential object of these rites was to announce to Heaven the success of a dynasty. It often happened, therefore, that, when his Ministers first suggested to a ruler that he should perform the sacrifices of Fêng and Shan, the ruler, out of modesty, refused to do so, and only yielded to great persuasion.

The ceremony became very elaborate, indeed. In the first place, four separate altars were required, each for a definite purpose. The first one to be used was erected south of the mountain, four *li* from its base. This was connected with the Fêng sacrifice to Heaven, but was not nearly so important nor so imposing as the large altar, fifty feet in diameter and nine feet in height, connected with the same rite and placed on the very summit of the mountain. The altar at the foot was probably only used to apprise the Spirit of T'ai Shan of the Imperial intention to worship, while the actual 'sealing' took place at the peak. The altar for the Shan sacrifice to Earth, octagonal in form, was erected near the foot of the mountain, at the hillock Shê Shou, and was used after the descent.

The fourth erection was simply an altar of audience,

where the Emperor received the congratulations of his officials at the conclusion of the whole celebration.

The sacrifices of Fêng and Shan differ from all other acts of Chinese worship, and suggest many questions to the inquiring mind. What were these altars? What exactly constituted the ceremonies? Ordinary sacrifices to Heaven and Earth have demanded a pyre upon which the offerings to the former are burnt, and a pit in which those to the latter are buried. Though at T'ai Shan pyre and pit exist, they are but secondary in importance.

The Emperor recited the merits of his ancestors, thanked Heaven for the support given to his line, and begged continuance of its favours. This announcement at the Fêng altar at the peak and the Shan altar at the foot were made by means of an inscription cut on tablets of jade, one foot two inches in length, five inches in width, and one inch in thickness. When the five were placed together, they therefore formed a mass as thick as it was wide. These were protected on either side by slabs of jade two inches thick, and in these slabs a groove was cut in order that the gold cord, which was passed around them five times and then sealed, should not slip.

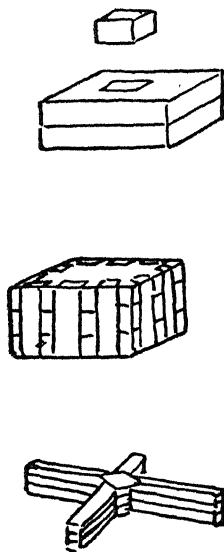
This collection of slabs was then placed in a jade box which it fitted most precisely, and the jade box was placed in one of stone, made of three square slabs five feet by one foot in size; in the centre stone an aperture was cut in which the precious box of jade containing the Imperial message was placed.

Ten further slabs of stone three feet high, one foot broad, and seven inches thick, were then let into grooves cut into the square stones and these were secured by



three gold cords each passing five times around the whole.

The stone coffer was further safeguarded by buttresses placed at the four angles. These were twelve stones ten feet long, two feet wide, one foot thick, with wedge-shaped apertures cut in their ends in which the corners of the box were inserted.



THE STONE COFFER CONTAINING THE JADE LETTERS

What was the significance of this ceremony, when, instead of burning or burying the communication to the Supreme Being, the Son of Heaven contented himself by enveloping the message with infinite care? It is probable that the Spirits of T'ai Shan and of the hillock Shê Shou were regarded as messengers, and that the Son of Heaven by burying his jade tablets considered

that he had entrusted them to the Spirits of T'ai Shan and of Shê Shou, who were expected to deliver them to the deities of Heaven and Earth.

#### THE SACRIFICE OF A.D. 1008

Upon the rare occasions that the ceremony took place, it was, according to all accounts, performed with singular pomp, but the occasions were very rare, indeed. The Records mention only four celebrations at the High Hill, and one at the Peak of the Centre, during the whole long course of Chinese history. Several times during the reign of Chên Tsung (whom I have already mentioned as having made the jade statue of the Princess of the Coloured Clouds), the famous Letters from Heaven were found. These letters were supposed to be direct communications from the Supreme Being, and various sites on the sacred mountain are pointed out as being the identical spot where such revelations were made.

Chên Tsung ordered that these letters, inscribed on jade tablets, be reverently buried upon the mountain-side and that a temple be erected in memory of the great event.

In A.D. 1008, twelve hundred and eighty-seven old men from the Province of Shantung repaired to the Imperial Palace to present a petition that the Emperor should perform the sacrifice of Fêng and Shan; and a similar petition was received from various functionaries of the Empire. He consented to comply, and issued an edict decreeing that in the tenth month of the year such sacrifice should be performed at T'ai Shan.

He then despatched officials of varying ranks to announce the fact to Heaven, to Earth, to the gods of the

soil and harvests, to the mountains and rivers. Messengers were also sent to the Temple of the Ancestors and the memorial temples in the Capital.

The preparations were made with infinite care and attention to detail. Choirs of singers and bands of dancers were appointed; sets of bells and of sonorous stones were prepared; and the characters on the jade tablets which bore the Imperial message were filled with gold.

It was decided that, besides the overseers of the sacrifice to the number of ninety-three, and the Imperial bodyguard, only twenty-four chosen officials should ascend the mountain with their Master.

The point as to whether the burnt sacrifices should take place before or after the sealing of the jade box caused much discussion; it was eventually decided that, after the last offering of jade, silk, and so on had been made, the Emperor, wearing a cap from which dangled twelve strings of pearls, should ascend the altar, seal the box of jade, and place it within the stone coffer; that he should then drink the sacrificial wine, and attend the gods upon their departure; and that all music should cease and the pyre be set alight.

It was, moreover, decided that, at the moment when the Emperor had accomplished the sacrifice of Fêng, torches placed at intervals from the altar at the summit to that at the base should be set alight, thus making a continuous line of flame from top to bottom of the Great Mountain.

It was furthermore decided that a tablet inscribed with red should be passed from one to another of the guards who were to line the great Pilgrims' Road, and

that upon its arrival at the mountain-foot all Dukes of the Palace and high dignitaries there waiting should assemble at the places allotted to them, whence from afar they could see the blazing sacrifice.

From the mountain-top cheers should arise which also should be passed from one to the other down the mountain-side, when at once the pyre below should also be set alight. Thus the rites should terminate.

It is impossible to describe in detail all the picturesque ceremonies which actually took place. From the time the Son of Heaven left his palace until he had safely returned, forty-seven days passed. During this time, although it was in the depth of winter, neither rain nor snow fell and the temperature was mild and agreeable, while many signs of good augury were manifested.

The evening before the sacrifice a strong wind blew sombre mists hither and thither, and torches could not be kept alight. During the ceremonies, however, the wind ceased, the firmament became limpid, and the flame from the myriads of torches rose straight to Heaven. When the sealing of the stone box had been accomplished, a violet cloud hovered about the altar, while an unearthly yellow light enveloped the stone coffer where the Imperial message, destined for Heaven, reposed.

Rare birds and strange beasts, sent as offerings from the four quarters of the Empire, were set at liberty. When day dawned, the disc of the sun appeared doubled, and a cloud of five colours floated above. Tambours and wind instruments were sounded, spectators in thousands lined the road, and cries of joy rose from Earth to Heaven.

Since then nine hundred years and more have elapsed. Although the ceremonies of Fêng and Shan have been abolished, the memory of the magnificence with which they were conducted remains vividly in the minds of men. More than one monument erected as a memorial upon the slopes of T'ai Shan evokes before the eye of the traveller the ghostly apparition of fairy-like processions trooping up and down the precipitous mountain-slopes: processions which recall the moment when the Son of Heaven desired to transmit a message to the Being by whose Decree he ruled.

We were all rather silent as we sat at the table laid with silver and glass, and dined hungrily in that luxurious private car. I must say it seemed very comfortable, indeed, after the strenuous hours of the day. My husband and the Municipal Councillor, who had insisted upon walking a large part of the way both up and down the mountain, ached in every muscle from the unaccustomed effort; the consular official was an elderly gentleman and had a right to fatigue; while I sat silent, because my inward eye was overflowing with scenes of past ceremonies held on that steep hillside.

## CHAPTER VII

### PICTURES FORESHADOWED

*Mounting the Pagoda at Tz'ü Ên, Temple of Compassionate  
Grace, together with many Scholars*

High, straight, we step over threshold of vast azure sky;  
No moment when tearing wind desists.

I am no master of contented thought,  
But climbing here transforms one hundred sorrows.

I realize and appreciate the strength of the Sainted Figures Teaching;  
Am able to enter fully into its deep interpretation.

Head thrown back, my eyes pierce this dragon's, serpent's hole;  
Now I emerge from darkness among props and buttresses

The Seven Stars are at the North doorway;  
I hear the River of Heaven flowing to the West.

Hsi Ho, the Charioteer, whips the white sun;  
Shao Hao, Spirit of Seventh Moon, leads clear Autumn.

Mountains of Ch'in suddenly seem broken atoms;  
I cannot distinguish clear Ching River from the muddy Wei.

Leaning forwards, looking down, only one stretch of mist;  
How can I recognize Imperial Domain?

Yellow crane never ceases in its flight;  
It utters plaintive cries; whither does it go, what does it seek?

Observe, my Lord, wild geese following the sun:  
Each has a plan for gathering harvest from the fields of rice!

TU FU: *The Autobiography of a Chinese Poet*



## CHAPTER VII

### *Pictures Foreshadowed*

#### LEAVING THE GRASS HUT

IT WAS with my mind still full of such 'past-time' pictures that I left China in 1923 for Canada, where our home for the next four years was to be in New Brunswick on the shore of Passamaquoddy, 'the Bay of Plentiful Fish.'

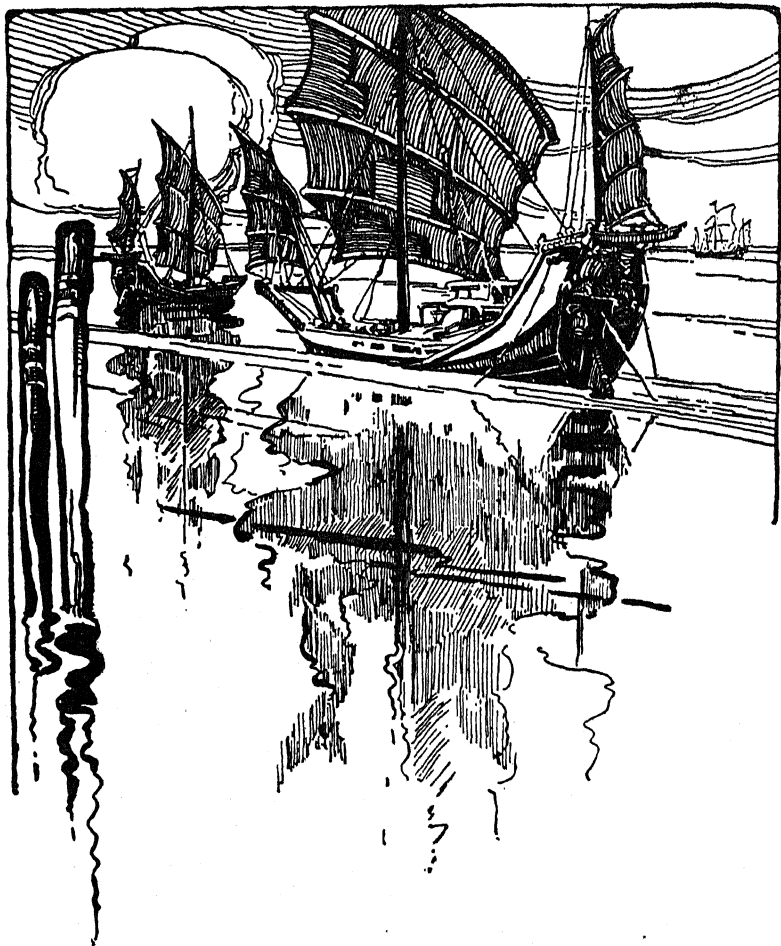
Our leaving the Grass Hut was to me very sad. My roots had struck deep in China and we had to leave just when the Yangtze Plain was looking its most beautiful. The period of Grain Rain or the Birthday of Flowers, when every shrub wears a congratulatory red tag, without which the Hundred Plants feel neglected and do not open many blossoms, had come and gone. Pure Brightness, with its willow boughs and opening buds, had also passed, and now we were to leave our quiet courtyards and deep bamboo grove for a very different land. Grain Rain was falling gently in its season, and tillers of the soil rejoiced. As Yo Fei and I walked from hamlet to hamlet through fields of rape which flaunted their yellow blooms under the pale pink and deep red blossoms of peach trees, and watched the busy country people, a little Chinese folk-song ran in my mind:

#### THE FARMER'S HOUSEHOLD

From dawn till dark they go out to weed the fields;  
By night they spin thread.



Boys and girls of the country village,  
Each know the household needs;  
Tiny children who are not able  
To drive a plough or throw a loom,  
Can yet learn to sow melon seed  
In the dark shade of mulberry trees.



TO WOOSUNG AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER

Mr. Cultivator-of-Bamboos came to wish us a 'fair wind for the entire road,' and brought me, in true Chinese fashion, a farewell poem which I carried with me when we left the Grass Hut.

TAKING LEAVE AT THE GRASS HUT

Wind and rain — I feel aversion to flowers as Spring wanes.  
The empty hall, left in charge of all things, does violence to  
my thoughts.

The hosts have already gone, they now follow the Season's  
wake,

When Spring revolves again, will they return or not return?  
I do not know.

It is hard to forbid the tears of separation,

I cannot endure to see the passing sail.

I only desire that the East flowing water,

At times shall take the long sealed letter

I shall send in care of the speckled carp.

Such was the China we left behind. In 1927, my husband and I returned, and the changes we found were bewildering.

'YELLOW FLOWERS ON THE BRIGHT MORROW'

This phrase I have taken from a Chinese poem of the second century before Christ. To the Chinese mind it suggests all things that are past. The flowers of today are faded tomorrow.

So it is that now in China many of the pictures which I have tried to outline in this book *are* past-time things, and the pictures of today are changing so rapidly that a movie camera rather than a Koh-i-Noor pencil is required to depict them. Yet the flowers of today are springing from the same root as that which

brought forth those I have drawn, and although, to continue a botanical simile, new grafts have altered the blooms, the stock remains the same. The ancient civilization of China was quite unsuited to twentieth-century intercourse among nations, and had, in the nature of things, to go.



TABLETS IN THE CONFUCIAN TEMPLE ON WHICH THE CLASSICS  
ARE CARVED — PAST-TIME THINGS

We think of China today and what mental pictures do we see? If you ask me to give the answer in a sentence, I would say, 'One sees in panorama a people forsaking its past'; but perhaps you would like me to go into some detail as to my meaning.

The form of government has completely changed. There is no longer a Son of Heaven, his emblem a dragon; nor is there even a President in our sense of the word. The Republic formed by the Chinese is governed by five different *yuan*s or committees, and the Chairman of the executive *yuan* is the highest officer in the land.

The emblem of this new Republic is a white sun on a blue ground.

The officials chosen by means of literary examinations, the so-called 'horses of the Emperor,' no longer exist. Government posts are filled with men of modern ideas, many of them having studied either in the West or in universities planned on the Western model.

The old system of education has gone, and a new system is being slowly introduced. Formerly a little boy would begin his studies at the age of seven by learning the famous Three-Character Classic, which was written in the thirteenth century. It was concerned principally with ethics and behaviour and has been compared by a Chinese writer to 'a jewelled sword which is an object of reverence to all.' The text opened:

Men at their birth are naturally good.

Their natures are much the same; their habits become widely different.

If foolishly there is no teaching, the nature will deteriorate. The right way in teaching is to attach the utmost importance to thoroughness.

Various examples were cited of individuals who, by the exercise of thoroughness, have become famous, and the text continued:

To feed without teaching is the father's fault.

To teach without severity is the teacher's laziness.

If the child does not learn, this is not as it should be.

If he does not learn while young, what shall he be when old?

The elements of filial piety and brotherly love were then referred to and the Classic proceeded to give instruction in practical things:

Learn to count, and learn to read.  
Units and tens, tens and hundreds,  
Hundreds and thousands, thousands and tens of thousands.  
The Three Forces are Heaven, Earth and Man.  
The Three Luminaries are the Sun, the Moon and the Stars.

Direction was then given on the points of the compass, the five elements — water, fire, wood, metal, and earth; the five virtues — charity of heart, duty towards one's neighbour, propriety, wisdom, and truth — which admit of no compromise. The six grains men eat and the six animals men use were enumerated; and then followed the seven passions, joy, anger, pity, fear, love, hate, and desire. Eighteen lines were devoted to the relationships of man and the obligations these kinships entail; sixty lines were needed to give an outline of the books which form the foundation of education; and the text proceeded:

When the Classics are understood, then the writings of the philosophers should be read.  
Pick out the important points in each, and take a note of all facts.

History was then attacked, and the child learned a doggerel which gives him an outline of events from the days of the legendary beings, who are supposed to have reigned some three thousand years before our era, until the period when the Classic was composed. This section closed with the following homily:

The Seventeen Dynastic Histories are all embraced in the above.

They contain examples of good and bad government.  
Whence may be learnt principles of prosperity and decay.  
Ye who read history must study the State Annals.

Whereby you will understand ancient and modern events, as  
though having seen them with your own eyes.

Recite them with the mouth, and ponder over them in your  
hearts.

Do this in the morning, do this in the evening.

Biography was the next subject treated, and the lives of various eminent and successful scholars were referred to: scholars who though poor rose, by their perseverance, to high positions of state. One who could not afford a candle studied by the white glare of moonlight reflected from snow; another who found himself in the same case caught fireflies and tied them beside his book; a third could not even afford to buy books, so copied out portions of historical works on a sheet made of plaited reeds; still another, a swineherd by profession, used scraped tablets of bamboo for the same purpose. In addition to the full-grown scholars—the swineherd, for instance, was fifty when he scraped his bamboos—the Three-Character Classic cited a number of infant prodigies and then ended with the following passages:

You young learners strive to bring about a like result.

Those who work will also succeed as he did.

The dog keeps guard at night; the cock proclaims the dawn.

If foolishly you do not study, how can you become men?

The silkworm produces silk, the bee makes honey.

If a man does not learn, he is not equal to the brutes.

Learn while young, and when grown up apply what you have  
learnt; influencing the sovereign above; benefiting  
the people below.

Make a name for yourselves, and glorify your father and  
mother,

Shed lustre on your ancestors, enrich your posterity.

Men bequeath to their children coffers of gold;

I teach you children only this one book,  
Diligence has its reward; play has no advantages.  
Oh, be on your guard, and put forth your strength.

Throughout the Classic there was no allusion to military prowess and conquering heroes, no triumphant generals nor doughty warriors are so much as mentioned. The whole emphasis was on learning and on correct behaviour.

Modern methods may be attractive, but do they lay as firm a foundation of ethical ideas as did the old? I wonder.

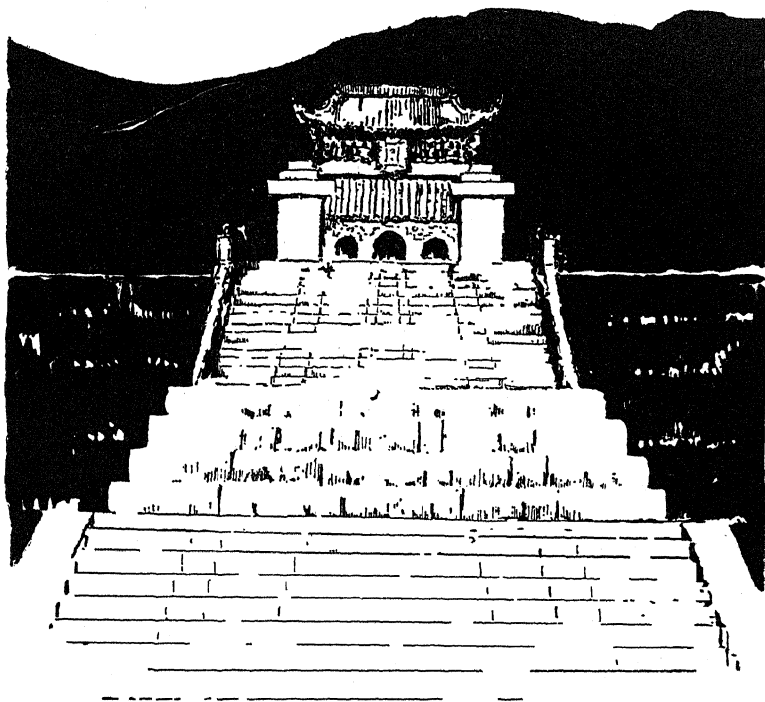
Nowadays little illustrated primers are used instead of the Classic. These are composed in a thoroughly Western and practical manner.

A wooden strip bearing the name of Confucius used to decorate every school-room and to this strip deep reverence was paid; special ceremonies taking place on the first and fifteenth days of the moon. This has been displaced by the portrait of Sun Yat-sen, the Chinese Father of the Republic, and every Monday morning a three-minute period of silence is held before it.

Travel used to be entirely by boat, sedan-chair, two-wheeled cart, or wheelbarrow. This wheelbarrow is, however, not like our little boxes with a wheel in front; it is quite different. The single wheel is placed between two seats on which people sit back to back. In the North much travel is accomplished by horses, donkeys, and mules, but in the South the many canals, which there take the place of roads, render boats more popular.

Nowadays, in addition to these slow methods of progression, more modern facilities are developing. Railroads, which have been in use for the past thirty

or forty years, are still not plentiful. For instance, in the whole wide stretch of China only some seven thousand miles of railway are in operation, and about half



---

TOMB OF SUN YAT-SEN IN NANKING

of these are in the Province of Manchuria, but roads for motor traffic are being built everywhere. Motor-busses filled with peasants and their bundles hurtle along, motor-cars honk their way between the peaceful fields; steamers stem the rivers, steam launches ply the canals, and motor-boats dart up the creeks; and in addition to these earth-bound vehicles, airplanes are now



invading the Chinese atmosphere as they invade our own.

Handicraft, for which the Chinese have been rightly famous, is giving way to machine production. Telegraphs, telephones, bicycles, electric lights, and so on and so forth, facilities which a child of the West considers a part and parcel of life, are now taking their place in the Central Flowery State.

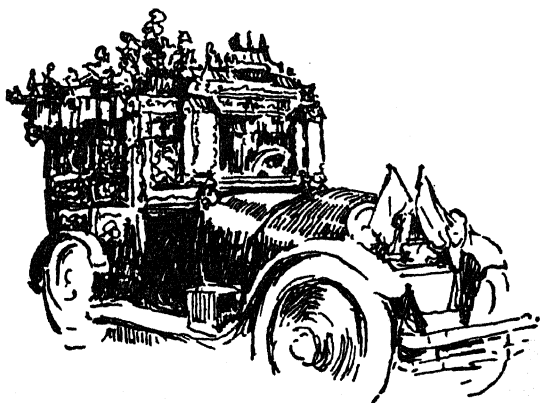
Marriage, too, is changing; the young men and women of China no longer wish to be bound by their parents' choice, but prefer to select their own mates. Marriages such as that described by Yo Fei are becoming less and less frequent. A picture of a wedding today would show the bride dressed, not in scarlet, but in pale pink. Sometimes even — but this is still rare — in white, which the Chinese wear for mourning! The heavy silk veil is discarded, but a bride often wears smoked glasses: in the interest of modesty, I suppose.

Students play a most important part in this modern China, and the demand for education far exceeds the capacity of the schools. As over ninety per cent of the population cannot read or write, the half-educated find employment in teaching those less instructed than themselves. Students also organize all sorts of processions and protests, assist enthusiastically in strikes, and agitate generally in favour of Nationalism and Enlightenment. They are very keen, too, about athletics. Whereas the young scholar of only a few years ago, exquisitely dressed in a long silk robe, used quietly to air his bird on the City Wall as the sun went down, he now goes in for violent exercise, and plays football, baseball, lacrosse, or tennis with vigour and vehemence.

Women used, of course, to live a very retired life, but now they are coming out into the glare of publicity. There are doctors, bankers, lawyers, nurses, and social workers among the present-day women of China, as there are among our own people.

A panorama of Chinese life would now show a people passionately interested in general enlightenment on world affairs: a people who devour newspapers, which with them are very, very modern, indeed. Those who cannot read these themselves listen spell-bound while some more fortunate member of the community reads aloud. Placards, pamphlets, all sorts of printed matter, are distributed widely. The radio, too, and the cinema have today their definite places in the life of the 'Black-Haired People' as they have with us.

In a word the so-called 'unchanging Chinese' are changing with the 'speed of fire.'



A SCARLET MOTOR-CAR DECORATED FOR A  
MODERN BRIDE















UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



124 487

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY